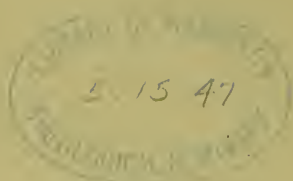


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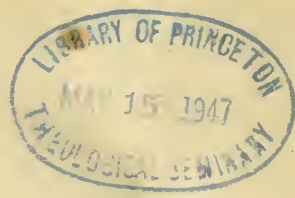
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ADDRESS,

TO THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

IN

CONNECTICUT,

ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THEIR RELIGIOUS CONCERNS.

BY AN OBSERVER.

HARTFORD:

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1833.



AN ADDRESS

TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES IN CONNECTICUT.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN :—

WILL you permit one, who feels an interest in the cause of Zion, to lay before you some considerations, which deeply concern every friend of evangelical truth ? That it is a time of trial and sifting in our churches, no one, at all observing of passing events, needs to be told. But the important question is, what can be done to avert the evils which threaten us, or to mitigate their unhappy consequences ? For one, I can say, that I have no hope of any remedy, or any improvement, until the churches are prepared to look candidly and feelingly at their real condition. The evils which exist must be probed to the bottom, and the secret causes of irritation and inflammation ascertained, before we shall be prepared to devise or apply remedies, or before we can expect from them any beneficial result. It is most evident that something is out of order, that there is some disease in our religious system ; for there are decided symptoms of irregular and febrile action. The parts do not harmonize, and the whole system is evidently tending to decay, if not to dissolution. A skilful physician, in such a case, would doubtless, in the first place, institute a thorough investigation of the cause and seat of the disease, that his efforts at healing might be well directed. And this, however unpleasant or ungrateful the process, seems to be the true policy in the present state of our religious concerns. For who can tell what to do, whether to mollify, or amputate, until he knows the nature and extent of the complaint. What is the cause, brethren, that our religious affairs are getting so sadly into confusion, and that our harmony is so greatly interrupted ? It has not been so heretofore, and something must be the matter.

I am aware that those, who undertake to investigate this case, will, in the view of many, be likely to get to themselves a blot ; and will by many be assailed as enemies to the common peace ; but this is not a sufficient reason for giving up the subject as desperate. The blessings of true religion, both here and hereafter, are too precious to be abandoned without an effort, or even a sacrifice. Nothing is to be gained by flattery or con-

cealment, but we shall find that, by such means, our symptoms are constantly becoming worse and worse. What then remains to be done, but manfully to look our danger in the face, and be willing to know our true condition? To aid you in this investigation is the object of the following address. And in attempting this, I propose to lay before you some general and leading principles, which need to be understood; and then to call your attention to such particular facts and conclusions, as may be requisite to a full developement of our danger, and the proper remedy.

As my remarks and statements are to be wholly concerned with matters of public notoriety and interest, and will depend on principles or evidence adduced, I have supposed that my name could be of no consequence at all, in the case, and it is therefore omitted. I wish to shun no responsibility in the undertaking which is in the least degree necessary to the exhibition of truth. But advantage is sometimes taken, by attaching something offensive or personal to the name, to turn away public attention from the subject. On this account, it is important, and even necessary, that names should be kept out of sight, that no thought about the writer, may straggle from its proper place in the pursuit of the object proposed. Notwithstanding, then, some presses in the State may have vented their spleen against anonymous publications, I shall take the liberty to exercise my own judgment in respect to the matter, and leave my address to rest on the merits of the subject of which it treats, without any extraneous support whatever.

The fact is, brethren, I wish to have you look at the principles and statements here presented, without any prejudices in relation to person, place, or thing. And I do not wish to give the opportunity for any, who may be concerned in these statements, to shield themselves, by an unwarrantable attack upon personal motives or character. I therefore hang the whole address on its own merits; if it be well founded and important, let it have its proper weight; and if not, give it to the winds. And I have to say farther in justification of this course, that it has precedent to plead. Many, and perhaps most, of the discussions of the day in respect to disputed points, have been anonymous. If any then are disposed to complain, let him that is without sin in this respect, cast the first stone.

What I ask is, that you will be attentive and impartial, while I proceed to lay before you some principles, facts, and conclusions, in which the interests of true religion in this State appear to be deeply involved.

IMPORTANCE OF SETTLING FIRST PRINCIPLES IN RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS.

When the mariner navigates dangerous seas, where hidden shoals and rocks are frequent, he must not suffer himself to be deceived by the smooth surface of the waters and take for granted that all is equally smooth beneath ; but he must have recourse to his chart and his sounding line, to ascertain in every stage of his progress, the safety or the danger of his position. So in religious concerns, there are many theories which are smooth and plausible on the surface, but which conceal rocks and quicksands, on which the heedless and credulous are sure to be wrecked. Those who would avoid such a catastrophe must have their chart and their sounding line, by which they may ascertain the safety of their course, before they press, with all sails set, into theories which they do not understand, and practices which they have never tried. In other words, it is indispensable that we have the first principles, the fundamental maxims and doctrines of true religion, properly defined and fixed in our minds ; that we may refer to them in all doubtful cases, just as the pilot resorts to his chart and line. For he that wavereth, in regard to the great doctrines or duties of religion, is like a wave of the sea, driven of the wind and tossed. Paul complains of those, “ who when for the time that they ought to be teachers, had need that one teach them again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and were become such as had need of milk and not of strong meat.” And he adds, “ For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.” If this be a correct rule, how large a proportion of our churches, must, we fear, be babes ; and how discouraging this fact to those, who are endeavoring to carry them forward to the higher mysteries of divine knowledge ? That pupil will make no advance, who does not learn and retain the rudiments. And there are rudiments in divine knowledge as well as in that of every other kind. These rudiments are always simple and intelligible, and, with proper attention to the means of information, they are within the reach of every rational mind.

As a preventive or a remedy for error, this knowledge of rudiments is equally important. And some effectual preventive or remedy is necessary in every case. For error is never coming before us in its true character. It will never present itself to our view, and say, I am error, love me and receive me as such. But it will put on the garb of truth, its true features will be carefully concealed, and it will say, I am truth, love me and receive me as such. How then are we to distinguish the one from the other ? Plainly, not by the name, or pretensions, or first appearance, but by the application of some test, or a careful search for some mark, which we have ascertained to be a proper and ef-

fectual criterion of truth. And to this purpose we must have those tests and marks ready for use. How does the pilot ascertain whether the water be navigable? Not by casting his eye upon the surface, but by the application of a known test. How does the mercantile man distinguish a genuine from a spurious bank note? He has certain tests or marks fixed in his own mind, and to them he instantly refers. In the same way, and by the same means, substantially, must the search for truth be directed.

I might enlarge on this subject, but a suggestion will suffice for present purposes. Without extending these remarks in the general form, I would rather take leave to draw the attention of those whom I address to a few particulars, which may be at the present time more especially interesting.

In the first place then, I submit a few remarks on the necessity of being able to distinguish essential truth.

Truth and error may be, each of them, essential or not essential. Two points of distinction are therefore important in the case. The first is, that between truth and error; and the other is the distinction between essential truth and that which is not essential; essential error, and that which is not essential. The first question therefore which comes up, respects the difference between truth and error. Many say it is immaterial what a person believes, provided he is sincere in his belief, which is as much as to say that any thing is true which we believe to be so. But as truth is the agreement of a declaration with fact or real existence, the question will return, is there any such thing as matter of fact or real existence in religious concerns? Is there a God; has he a fixed moral character; does he administer a moral government; does he require any qualities of character in his creatures as necessary to salvation? If there be matter of fact in regard to these things, then there must be such a thing as essential truth, as distinguished from error. For we must all be sensible that our belief or unbelief will not change any fact. And we believe the truth when we believe that testimony which agrees with matter of fact, or the real state of things.

But, in many cases, where the difference between truth and error is admitted, the plea still is, that the truths, about which there may be a difference of opinion, are not essential truths, and consequently, let the truth be on which side it may, the truth or the error should not be matter of serious regard. Now, as there may be a good foundation for this plea, it is very important to distinguish essential truth from that which is not essential.

Essential truth is that, on which a system so depends, that if it be taken away, the whole must fall. It is called fundamental truth, in reference to a building. And as this may afford a good illustration of the subject, it may be well to look at the connexion between the different parts of a building. There are some parts which may be absent, and yet the building, as to all im-

portant purposes, may remain. But there are other parts, the foundation or the pillars, for example, if removed, the whole must fall. Thus there were two pillars in the temple of Dagon among the Philistines, on which the whole edifice rested. And by tearing away these, Samson laid the whole temple in ruins. Thus it is said, in reference to this same illustration, "if the foundations be destroyed, what shall the righteous do?" Essential truth, then, is to a system of truth, what the foundation or pillars are to a building. And as a building cannot exist without a foundation and pillars, so no system of truth can exist without some truths which are essential. Every man, who has any system of belief at all, has some essential truths in his system. And the question now is, how shall he distinguish essential from non-essential truth? To answer this question correctly, we may ask, how will a man distinguish the essential parts of a building? Plainly by considering the connexion of one part with another, and of certain parts with the whole. If he finds a loose board or stud, which may be removed without injuring other parts or endangering the whole, that is an unessential part. If any body questions the propriety of such a part or the use of it, the owner of the building may, in condescension, consent to its removal; and though his house may not be complete, yet he may have and enjoy an entire house. But if a pillar or corner stone be the subject of offence to any, and the question of its removal comes up, the owner of the building would say with the utmost propriety, you may not remove that part, for then I shall have no house. And it is better for my neighbor to be offended, if he will, than for me to be destitute of a shelter. So of religious truth, that which is essential must be ascertained, by considering its connexions, and the consequences of its removal. For example: Supposing the question respecting the mode of baptism comes to view, and one believes that sprinkling or affusion is sufficient, while another insists on immersion. Is this then a question which involves essential truth? To determine this point we inquire, what does the question respect? The answer is, it respects a rite or symbol in use in the Christian church, and simply the quantity of water to be used in this symbol. If the water were expected to wash away sin, then the quantity might be of essential importance. But as no one supposes this, and as the use of water in great or small quantities, is merely symbolical of the efficacious washing of the Holy Ghost; and as the symbolical meaning of one drop of water is precisely the same with that of an ocean; it is plain that water, in one quantity or mode of application, is just as efficacious as in another. This point therefore is perfectly unessential, and ought never to separate Christian brethren.

But if we look at the doctrine of Universal salvation, and inquire whether this doctrine involves essential error; the answer

will speedily follow by considering, that this doctrine promises happiness without holiness, or any adequate provision for holiness. It represents Christ as a Saviour from punishment, but not from sin ; it is therefore inconsistent with itself, subverts the whole system of the Gospel, and is an essential error.

On the same principle, the doctrine of the divinity of Christ is found to be an essential truth, because Christ could not make an atonement for sin unless he possessed divine qualifications ; and if he did not make an atonement, then, either men are still, and must be forever in hopeless rebellion, or they have never sinned. On either supposition, the whole system of salvation by Christ falls to the ground. The divinity of Christ then is a corner stone in a system of grace. The same may be said of the divinity of the Holy Ghost. His agency in the plan of redemption is a divine agency, being represented in the Scriptures as equivalent to creation ; and if the Spirit be not divine, it is evident he cannot perform a divine operation.

If we take up the doctrine of depravity, the native, total, and universal depravity of men, and consider its bearing on a system of grace by Christ Jesus, or its connexion with such a system, we shall see at once, that this doctrine is essential to a system of free grace. According to the statements of Scripture, and every rational view of the subject, the whole system of salvation by Christ depends upon this doctrine. Remove it, and all that is said about atonement, redemption, pardon, and sanctification, goes with it. The doctrine of native depravity is essential to a system of truth offering salvation, because it forms the only ground on which the total universal depravity of man can be accounted for, and because the testimony of Scripture, if it proves any depravity at all, proves that we are *by nature* the children of wrath. If men are born holy, or without any moral character at all, it is incredible that all, without a solitary exception, should immediately and totally involve themselves in sin. If then we recede from the doctrine of native depravity, we must recede from that of total and universal depravity, and of course from the absolute necessity of atonement or regeneration in every case ; and thus we must abandon the system of the Gospel.

The special supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, is also, by the same principle, found to be an essential doctrine of the Gospel. If there is nothing supernatural in this work, then there is nothing but what man may be supposed to perform. And if man perform it, then there is no grace in it ; then there was no need that Christ should die to procure the agency of the Holy Spirit, and there was no need that the Holy Spirit should be sent down to do the work ; and of course the whole system of the Gospel becomes a nullity. By a supernatural work, I mean a work which requires divine power ; that is to say, a work that cannot be performed by instruments. It is

true that instruments are employed and made effectual in connexion with this work, in enlightening the understanding, and convincing the conscience ; and thus God is said to have begotten believers with the word of truth. But the work, here described as done with the word of truth, is evidently not a supernatural work, and therefore not the renewal of the heart. Paul says to some, "I have begotten you through the Gospel." Now that which Paul could do, could not have been supernatural. The term begotten, then, we conclude, relates either to the preliminaries or consequents of the change of heart, rather than to the change itself. In regard to the change of heart itself, Paul thus declares, "He that first commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts," &c. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." This peculiar work is not said to be done with the word of truth, nor did Paul ever pretend that he effected it ; but, on the contrary, he asserts repeatedly, to this amount, "he that planteth is nothing, he that watereth is nothing, but God who giveth the increase." By a supernatural work of the Spirit, I mean just what took place in the case of Lydia. She attended to the things that were spoken of Paul, which were the word of truth. But why did she attend ? because the Lord had opened or prepared her heart. Her heart was opened, not by the truth, but to the truth. And surely, the truth could not operate till it found an entrance. The truth is always the object on which holy affections fasten, and the instrument of bringing them forth into exercise, and this operation is denoted sometimes by the term *begotten*, and sometimes by the term *converted*. But the instrumentality of truth cannot be applicable to a heart that is dead in trespasses and sins, unless it be first prepared, or, as it was in the case of Lydia, opened. And that preparation or opening must be by supernatural power. Thus conversion is sometimes represented by the process of vegetation. But the fallow ground is first to be broken up, before it will receive seed, or before the seed will take root. And what consistency would there be in saying the fallow ground is broken up by the seed ? Now the seed is the truth, and the fallow ground is the natural heart. What consistency then is there in saying, that the heart is changed or prepared for the truth, by or with the truth itself ? Suppose the truth is presented by the Holy Spirit even, without any preparation of the heart by divine power, and the case will not be varied. It matters little what agent presents the truth, or sows the seed, so long as the fallow ground is not broken up. And it does violence to all analogy to suppose that seed is an agent or instrument of preparing the ground for its own reception. Plainly then there must be a special supernatural work of the Holy Spirit on the heart, or there is no spiritual regeneration, and if not, then the whole system of grace fails. Agreeably to this conclusion is that of Paul, (Heb.

4: 1,) in giving the reason why the word of God failed of its designed effect in the case of the ancient Israelites. "But the word preached did not profit them." Why? "Not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Here is a case directly in point. The word preached did not profit, and that, not because it was not presented, or not presented in a proper manner; but for want of preparation in them that heard it. Now, I challenge any man to explain this passage in consistency with the idea that the heart is changed by the instrumentality of truth. Why, in that case, did not the word preached cut its own way and produce the requisite faith? And why does it not do this in thousands of cases, where it is faithfully preached, and proves a savor of death unto death? The above doctrines are mentioned only as examples of the class of essential truths. Other doctrines might be named, and would be, if a complete list were now designed. But my present purpose is rather to shew that there is essential truth, and that it may be ascertained, and should be, than to specify every instance of such truth. But if there be such a thing as essential truth, and if this may be known, then it is no difficult thing to detect heresy. For heresy is the denial of any essential doctrine of the Gospel, or the teaching of any doctrine essentially opposed to the Gospel; of which denial or teaching, every man is his own judge.

In the second place—I would further remark, that union and charity cannot be consistently maintained at the expense of essential truth.

Union and charity are delightful terms, and in their proper place and connexion, they have a delightful meaning. It is true beyond all question, that no reasonable sacrifice should be refused for their preservation. But valuable as these blessings are, they may be obtained and preserved at too great expense. If essential truth must be the price, and if that solid foundation be abandoned, what is union but agreement in falsehood, or charity, but a confounding of the eternal distinction between right and wrong, truth and error? At this point then we halt, and say, shew us the truth, as the basis; or farewell to union or charity. We go as far as truth or duty will warrant, and farther than this, none will go, but those who are regardless of either.

It is unquestionable that these terms, so lovely in themselves and in their proper application, are often abused for the most profligate purposes. The truth is, that union, and charity, and peace, meaning by these terms agreement with what is wrong, or connivance at it, or improper compliances with pernicious sentiments or customs, may be among the greatest crimes. And when we look at the evils in the church and in the world, for which these terms have served as a cloak, their potent spell seems to dissolve, and we cannot but be impressed with the idea that the greatest blessings, when abused, become the greatest evils.

But I need not argue this point at all. The Scriptures are very explicit. We are therein commanded not to be partakers of other men's sins. We are commanded even to *contend earnestly* for the faith. Paul expressly enjoins on Timothy the duty of separation, in the following terms, viz: 1 Tim. 6: 3, 4, 5, "If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness; from such *withdraw thyself*." I need not cite another passage, when the very duty in view is here so clearly enjoined. Paul directed Timothy not to live in visible union or fellowship with those who would not consent to sound doctrine, according to the words of Christ. And who will accuse Paul of being a schismatical or turbulent man, a man who sowed the seeds of contention in the church?

But when I say that union or charity are not to be maintained at the expense of essential truth, I mean that union and charity only which imply fellowship and approbation. And the duty of separation for which I contend is merely that of dissent. I hold fast the protestant principle, that every man's opinion and conscience in his own religious concerns, are to be secure in their proper sphere. No such thing as pain or penalty for religious opinion is to be so much as thought of. Persecution will be the resort only of barbarians. But the same principle which gives a man the right to think for himself, gives him also the right to differ, and if he see cause, to separate from others. And the man who openly concurs in sentiments which he does not believe, acts both foolishly and wickedly.

Separation, therefore, from those who do not hold the essential truths of the Gospel, is clearly a duty. As such it was contemplated by our Saviour. And on that account he anticipated great wrath and bitterness from the enemies of his truth. He says, in reference to this effect, "I came not to send peace but a sword." That is to say, his religion, being founded in truth, and leading to holiness, must from its very nature, be exclusive. It could not amalgamate with the religions of the world. It could not bend or bow for favor; and therefore it would excite the enmity of all worldly minds, who would endeavor to seduce the friends of Christ into a treacherous peace. And such we know has been the state of facts. The world has hated the followers of Christ, because they would not interchange fellowship and charity. The old heathen of Rome, on the first promulgation of Christianity, were ready to say to the Christians, come, unite with us, worship our gods, and we will give Jesus a place among them. We will worship Jesus, if you will worship Jupiter.

And could Christians have consented to this union, not a fire would ever have been kindled, nor a wild beast let loose, to destroy the followers of Christ. But they were not of the world, they knew that Christ and Belial had no concord, and therefore they must separate. They loved truth more than peace. And the consequence was, the heathen raged, and vented their rage in the blood, and groans, the fire, and war, of ten general persecutions.

And, under Rome papal, what did the Sovereign Pontiff require but union and peace? If all were willing to submit to him as the head of the church, and to unite in executing his will, and to exercise charity for all the works of darkness which he practiced or licensed, then all was well, and the current would flow on smoothly. And to this day, how does the Roman Antichrist complain of schism; how does he fulminate his curses at the head of Luther, and the Reformers, because they made a separation? Having seated himself in an easy chair, he wished all to keep peace, and be united in support of his presumption.

How did Nebuchadnezzar also enjoin union and charity, when he called upon all people in his realm to worship the golden image? And how fiercely did his anger burn against those who dissented, and separated from the great mass of idolaters? How did Sanballat, and Geshem, and Tobiah, propose union and peace to Nehemiah, when they sent unto him, saying, "Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono?" But Nehemiah felt it his duty to keep himself separate, and to reply, "I am doing a great work, and therefore cannot come down."

Before, then, we admit the plea of union and charity, or yield in the least degree to its influence, we must examine the basis of this union. Is it the foundation of truth? Is it the foundation, of which Jesus Christ himself is the chief corner stone? If so, then seek the things that make for peace, and have fellowship, one with another. But if not, what is to be done? Plainly, the word of the Lord is, come out and be separate.

"Charity," says Dr. Miller, in his excellent letters to the Presbyterian Church, "has eyes, and ears, and intellect." Consequently we must not expect charity to be a mere dotard. Those who claim charity are bound to deserve it.

A limb, however useful in its sound state, may, by disease, become a nuisance to the whole body, and render amputation not only necessary but even desirable. The fairest fruit, may have unsound parts, which are not only worthless in themselves, but are communicating the influence of dissolution to all the adjacent parts. Who hesitates in such a case to preserve the sound parts by a separation from the unsound? Who deprecates the stroke of the knife, or the wound that divides? Who, in such a case, cries out against the evils of division, and advocates the

duty and policy of union, except those who desire the destruction of the whole ?

The application of these remarks to the concerns of religion, is very obvious. It is clear that union, in all cases where the basis of truth is wanting, is treason against the cause of religion, and is really, though indirectly, acting against its interests.—Those who continue to hold essential error in charity, and to extend to it their fellowship, do countenance and support error at the expense of truth. And, moreover, so strong is the natural tendency of the heart to error, that no man ought to feel himself safe while in contact with dangerous errors respecting religious subjects. No man ought to suffer himself unnecessarily to hear erroneous sentiments advanced or defended ; any more than Adam ought to have listened to the temptation to eat the forbidden fruit. The atmosphere of error is pestilential, and he who breathes it must expect to have the seeds of moral disease sown deeply in his vitals.

In the third place—I submit a few remarks on the importance of independent views and personal conviction of the truths of religion, in the case of every person.

There have been periods and portions of the church, when and where the sentiment has been inculcated, that ignorance is the parent of devotion, and that the common people have nothing to do with the truths or duties of religion, but to receive them implicitly from the officers of the church. But this sentiment has filled the church with corruption, and the world with darkness. Such maxims may subserve the purposes of ambitious men, who wish to multiply blind adherents, for their own elevation, but they will never promote the true interests of the soul, or the church, nor can they bear a moment's candid examination. It is true that a person, otherwise ignorant, may be taught by the Spirit of God, and thus, in an extraordinary manner, be led to the knowledge as well as the experience of the truth. But still this person has knowledge. And the only respect in which his case differs from those of ordinary occurrence is the manner in which the knowledge is obtained. And that is a manner, in which those cannot reasonably expect to obtain knowledge, who neglect the means put into their hands. There is then no alternative. A person must obtain a personal conviction and independent knowledge of the truth, or he cannot love the truth, or exhibit its proper fruits. The belief of another cannot, for that reason and on that ground, be our belief. For the mind cannot be in possession of a subject as matter of belief, without some satisfactory evidence of its truth. And in matters of sentiment, the belief of another is no sufficient evidence of the truth of what he believes, because men often and greatly err in their opinions. Matters of fact may be substantiated by testimony, but not so with matters of opinion. These

must be decided by every mind for itself. And without this decision, in view of satisfactory evidence offered to the mind, there can be no rational belief. And though it may be thought to be very easy and commodious to believe as others do, and have no more trouble about opinions, or to say, I believe as the Holy Mother Church believes, and there leave the whole concern of doctrine; yet it must be manifest, on a moment's reflection, that in this way, a person believes nothing at all.

It is not indeed necessary that the mind should originate its own knowledge, it may use the labors of others, in arriving at the knowledge of truth. The mind may receive the statements and arguments of others, and compare them with a standard, and thus be greatly assisted in its efforts. But after all, the mind must have a view of the evidence and ground of its own conclusions, or it can have no real conclusions. All the angels in heaven cannot give a knowledge of truth to the mind, but by exhibiting the evidence. And religious truth, being especially designed to be an object of affection, must be a subject of personal perception and independent belief. This view of the subject cuts off the Roman principle of receiving the belief of the church as our belief, without any knowledge of what that belief is. The thing, in any rational sense, is impossible. Put the matter to trial for a moment. Say, I believe what the Holy Catholic Church believes, and because she believes it. But what does the Holy Church believe? That I do not know, nor does it concern me. But do you believe there is a God? If the church believes it I do, otherwise I do not. But you either believe, or disbelieve it, in your own mind. If you believe, then be it so, the Holy Church cannot set aside the fact. And if you do not believe, the Holy Church cannot make your unbelief real faith. The same principle cuts off all who, through credulity or ignorance, depend on others for their faith. There are many in the community that seem to make no calculations to know any thing themselves; but the fact that somebody else believes, is sufficient for *them*. They do not reflect that whether Mr. Somebody be right or wrong, his belief cannot be theirs, merely because it is his, and therefore that they are left without any faith. Religious concerns, any more than worldly interests, were never intended to flourish by idleness. And those persons who will allow themselves no time nor means for reading, or gaining information, will find presently, that their poverty will come as one that travelleth, and their want as an armed man. And many, in their haste to be rich, and their inordinate love of money, are starving the nobler mind, and preparing themselves for everlasting indigence and shame. Let it be then, deeply engraven on our minds, that to believe any thing merely because others do, is to believe nothing, and that without some personal understanding, and independent conviction of the truth,

we shall inevitably be found unbelievers, and be dealt with accordingly.

The above remarks and principles, it is believed, will be generally admitted. And they are principles having an application to the circumstances of the church. They are principles of reference in the detection of error, and the establishment of truth.

STATEMENTS CLAIMING ATTENTION.

The way being duly open, I have now to bring to your notice certain existing facts and circumstances, in relation to our ecclesiastical and theological concerns in this State, in respect to which I now solicit your candid consideration, and fair conclusion. And in doing this, I beg you to be assured, that, unless I am totally deceived respecting my motives, I have no design to make divisions or cherish a spirit of unreasonable jealousy. Neither is it my object to criminate any individuals in the community. Every thing which unavoidably assumes this appearance I sincerely deprecate. It is inexpressibly painful to be obliged to expose the character or conduct of any fellow creature; and especially, when that character and conduct have a near relation to the interests of religion. But the apprehension that the cause of truth and religion will suffer more by silence than by speaking, places the subject in a different light. It is comparatively easy to keep silence and leave every thing to its course, and, if self-interest were the only governing principle, silence would be the resort of all who see error prevailing, and gaining the ascendancy in popular favor. But silence, in such a case, is denying the truth and abetting error. It is betraying the cause which is, to those who sincerely love it, far more precious than personal ease or popular applause. These considerations, unless motives are entirely misapprehended, will explain to you the present attempt. It is a sense of duty, and a desire to promote the interests of pure religion, that prompts the statements now to be made. At the same time, being about to enter on what I regard as an imperious duty, I shall endeavor to do the work to some purpose, without fear or favor of any man. I shall endeavor to put you in possession of facts in the most simple and direct manner. And under these circumstances, whatever mercenary printers may think or say to the contrary, I shall not feel myself liable to the charge of bringing railing accusations, or spreading evil reports.

NEW DIVINITY, AND NEW MEASURES.

After all that has transpired within a few years past, in this State, it were mere affectation to pretend, that there is not a distressing division, both in regard to doctrines and measures,

among our ministers and churches. It can no longer be concealed, and if it could, the attempt would be worse than useless, that a system of doctrines and a course of practice have been, within a few years past, introduced into our Theological Seminary, our College, and some of our churches, which were unknown to our pilgrim fathers, and which are extremely adverse to the habits of our denomination for the last fifty years. That such is the lamentable fact, is, I presume, now too generally known to need any proof. And though the claim of these doctrines and measures to novelty in a general view, is inadmissible, yet I shall call them, as they have been frequently called by their advocates, "*new doctrines*," and "*new measures*." I might call them *Arminian*, or *Pelagian*, and *fanatical*, without any violence to my own convictions, or those of many others. But the terror or prejudice of a name is not a weapon which I have any occasion or inclination to wield. To designate this new scheme by any personal epithets seems hardly fair. For though it early made its appearance in this State, and in our theological school, yet it seems to have been a kind of simultaneous effusion in all parts of the country, and spread through the combustible materials, prepared for it, with the rapidity of lightning, and with the smoke and explosion of "spark on nitrous grain." It is therefore difficult now to tell of what person or place this divinity, and these measures are the offspring. Suffice it then to call them, as their friends appear to concur in calling them, **NEW DIVINITY**, and **NEW MEASURES**.

The first question then which occurs here, is, what is the new divinity; what are the new measures? This question, till quite recently, has been a very difficult one to answer. It has been much more easy to tell what they are not, than what they really are. Either the projectors of this new scheme designed to keep their sentiments in concealment, or they have not been capable of being intelligible; for the fact is, all in respect to this scheme has been obscurity and confusion. The difficulty has been, not to refute doctrines and arguments, but to learn what they are. This difficulty however seems now to be in some measure removed. A spirit of more frankness and directness seems to have been imbibed, and certain recent events, which I shall have occasion to notice in the sequel, have removed the injunctions which have rested on the subject, and we can now see the system in some of its distinct features.

I design then, in a few succeeding remarks, to take up the inquiry—what is the *new divinity*, and what are the *new measures*, and endeavor to throw some light upon it. But I have first a word or two to say. It will be remembered, that the plea of those suspected of departing from the faith of their fathers, has all along been—*no difference but in terms*. And it is well known that those who have suspected more difference than

this, have been stigmatized as jealous or malicious. The manner in which these speculations have been stated, has been hypothetical and ambiguous. And when any specific charge has been preferred, the advocates of new doctrines have uniformly made a movement to the rear, by saying, we are *misunderstood* and *misrepresented*. The language of these innovations, has uniformly been that of doubt and scepticism, rather than that of manly statement. “*I do not know;*” “*How do you know,*” and “*It may be that no one can prove,*” &c., are the phrases, which, like a magic wand, have made truth and error appear alike. You all remember the entire creed which came forth some eighteen months since, with a huge appendix of note and comment, an anomaly in the history of creeds. And you remember the patriarchal solicitude which was manifested on the occasion, to draw out and set before you, a *fair, honorable, and honest* statement of the new doctrines, to prove to your satisfaction, that they are in no wise different from established orthodoxy. This was the plea, and the only plea, a year and a half since. But now this plea has become stale, and its efficacy is exhausted. Now we hear from some of the subaltern writers and printers of the new divinity, that the difference exists in one point only, and that point respects the moral character of infants. It seems now to be admitted that, in this point, there is a difference, though a very *small, unimportant* difference, as we are told. And this *small* difference respects the moral state and character in which man commences his existence. But how comes it to pass that this concession is now made?—I have an explanation to offer; you will judge for yourselves of its correctness. Professor Stuart, in his *Commentary on the Romans*, with a boldness and recklessness, which unhappily often characterize biblical critics, has, by a dash of assertion, swept away the testimony of Paul to the native depravity of infants. Professor Stuart has the reputation of learning, and the advocates of new divinity seem to be greatly encouraged, by gathering together under the wing of the learned Professor. They have plucked new courage, and have dared at length to own one sentiment, as their legitimate offspring. This circumstance is certainly important, as it fixes a rule of exegesis, by which the declarations of new divinity are to be interpreted. And that is, that all those points, about which doubt has been expressed, will be openly avowed as subjects of full belief, as soon as the advocates of new doctrines are emboldened to do it, by finding the shield of some great name. And if Professor Stuart proceeds, in his adventurous criticism, to carry out his principles to their consequences, we shall be in the way to have a complete creed, without note or comment, very speedily. If this has been done in one instance, why will it not probably be done in others? Men who have waxed so valiant as to admit one point of differ-

ence, contrary to their repeated asseverations, may find their courage rise to the point of another, and another concession, until we have the whole scheme.

But the foregoing concession is not the only developement of the new doctrines which has recently occurred. As friends and advocates have multiplied, caution has diminished, and from various sources we may now gather the following summary as comprising the essential peculiarities of new divinity :

1. Men are born into the world without any moral character, as free from moral defilement or sinful propensity, as Adam before he fell.

2. Adam was created without any moral character, and the image of God in which he was created, means nothing more than a rational soul.

3. Sin consists, not in any specific opposition of heart to God or the truth, but in preference of the world. The opposition to God is secondary, arising from a supposed interference of the divine will with the inclinations of men. Consequently depravity in man is nothing more than misapprehension as to the character of God and the nature of happiness.

4. Regeneration therefore consists in the correction of this misapprehension, and is effected in all cases, and must necessarily be, by the instrumentality of truth presented to the mind.

5. The office work of the Holy Spirit is to present truth to the mind, not to prepare the heart for its reception. And the greater efficacy of the operations of the Spirit, than those of men, is owing to the greater clearness with which truth is presented.

6. In his moral government God does the best he can. And the occurrence of sin in the government of God is chargeable to the defectible nature of moral agency, as something which God cannot control, and, therefore, like friction in a machine, a necessary evil to which he must submit. And the divine wisdom and goodness are manifested in so managing this uncontrollable evil, as to produce the least possible mischief.

These, to say nothing of others, are all points of difference between the new divinity and orthodoxy, as I shall presently shew. Those therefore who assert that the difference lies in one point only, assert what they know, or ought to know, is false.

It is not my design to enter on a minute examination of this creed, my principal object being to shew wherein the new divinity essentially consists. There are a few remarks, however, which can hardly be omitted, though they will probably occur to every attentive reader.

It is supposed in this scheme that man was created without any moral character. He was made a rational being, and furnished with powers to be a moral agent, and there he was left by his Creator, without any moral character or quality. His moral character and acts, of course, must come by the move-

ment of his powers. But the question is, what moves these powers, or so moves them, as to produce moral acts? Here is a set of powers having no moral quality, and placed in circumstances having no moral quality. Now can any one of Adam's race tell how such powers, thus situated, can produce acts having moral qualities? These powers, if they are not moral in their first creation, I suppose must be physical. And the influence to which they are exposed, before they act, being not moral, must be physical. Here then is a wonder indeed, physical influence operating on physical powers, produces moral effects! Here, for example, is a water wheel; this is a physical power, but it will not move without some moving cause. It is adapted to be acted upon by water, a physical agent. You let on the water and the wheel moves. Now why are not those movements moral acts; and why does not that wheel acquire, by moving, a moral character? The answer is, the power has no moral quality, the agent or cause has no moral quality, therefore the effects or acts can have no moral quality. Very well, all correct so far. But here are certain powers of mind, which are supposed to be as destitute of moral quality as the water wheel, and placed in circumstances which are supposed to be as destitute of moral quality as the water. And yet, these powers, under this influence, are supposed to produce moral acts, and to be the origin of moral character. And this is called philosophy, new divinity. Now I say, and I trust every reasonable man will justify me in saying, all this is absolutely ridiculous and absurd. Here, for instance, is a man that has power to murder his neighbor, if he is disposed. But he is not disposed, in fact, he has no disposition, one way or the other. He has power of muscle, and he has a will, that will choose if any thing moves it to choose. But he has no moral character or quality, and can have none until he acts. Now the question is, how can he act, in a moral sense, or produce moral acts, in this situation? The strength of his arm, it is true, may take away his neighbor's life, but he has no disposition or intention concerning it. He did not choose to do it, for he had nothing to lead him to choose. The truth of the case is, according to the new divinity, he cannot have a moral state or character until he acts and makes one; and it is evident to every mind, that he will not act till he has some moral quality, so we must dismiss the man as nothing more than a reasoning animal, or, as to all moral relations, a stone or a post.

The article in the new divinity which ascribes regeneration to the instrumentality of truth, deserves one or two remarks. I have already, in treating on essential truth, shewn the inconsistency of this theory. But as it comes to view now in the form of an article, and as the office work of the Holy Spirit is declared to be the employment of truth as an instrument. I cannot

dismiss this vital subject without a few moment's further attention. Instrumentality may be divided into common and special. Common instrumentality, depends on some existing law of nature, and all agency or instrumentality of this kind, consists in making such arrangements as to take advantage of that law of nature. But when these arrangements are properly made, the effect is uniform and certain. Thus the power of gravitation renders the pendulum an instrument of dividing time, and the water wheel the instrument of moving machinery. The expansiveness of water renders steam an instrument of raising or propelling heavy bodies. The law of nature, that a harder substance, in certain forms, will displace a softer, renders the axe an instrument of felling the tree. But in respect to this kind of instrumentality, it is essential that the effect be uniform and certain, in proportion as the cause is brought into a situation to operate. If the effect does not follow, it is an indication of the intervention of divine power. If the pendulum does not move when placed under the operation of the law of gravity, or if the wheel does not follow the impulse of the water, or the axe does not enter the tree, when suitably applied, it is by all esteemed a miracle. For he only, who made the laws of nature, is competent to suspend them. Now, if the supposed instrumentality of truth in changing the heart be of this kind, the effect must always be the same. If truth is like the axe in felling the tree, why does not the axe always cut, or the tree always fall? Perhaps it will be said the axe is some times dull, or is not skilfully used. But this does not reach the difficulty. I admit that, in natural or common instrumentality, the effect will be varied in different circumstances according to the application of the cause. But this is only a circumstantial variation. If a man has strength and skill to cut down one tree, we conclude that, with the same strength and skill, and the same instrument, he may cut down another, and any tree he pleases. But this will not hold in the instrumentality of truth. If Peter could so present truth as to convert, by its instrumentality, three thousand at Jerusalem, why could he not, by the same instrumentality, convert Simon Magus, or his murderers at Rome? If Paul could beget many at Corinth and Ephesus, through the Gospel, why could he not by the same means, renew Felix, or Agrippa? And if the truth, properly presented, will change the heart, why should our Saviour say, because I tell you the truth, ye believe not? Certainly, no rational man will pretend that truth has an instrumentality of this kind, in changing the heart. If it has, why is not every sinner who hears the Gospel converted? And if the axes of orthodoxy are too dull, why do not the sharp and burnished tools of the new divinity produce the effect? Why is any man unconverted, especially who comes in contact with the *new divinity* -

urged home by the *new measures*? And yet there are trees so sturdy that they do not fall, though they have been hacked and hewed for years. Are all these cases miracles? Is the failure owing to the intervention of God, or a suspension of the laws of nature?

Another kind of instrumentality is called special, because it depends on the special appointment and intervention of God. And this kind of instrumentality is, in all cases, miraculous. It was the instrumentality of the rod of Moses, in dividing the Red Sea, or the ram's horns, in levelling the walls of Jericho, or the word of Joshua, in causing the sun and moon to stand still. But will any man contend that the change of the heart is a miraculous operation? If so, why has it not ceased with other exertions of miraculous power? If neither of these kinds of instrumentality is supposable in the case, it will follow that truth has no instrumentality at all in changing the heart. And thus it is represented in the Scriptures, as I have already shewn. "He that commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts," &c. What instrumentality was employed in commanding the light to shine out of darkness? And if the cases are parallel, as an inspired Apostle represents them to be, what instrumentality is employed in shining in the heart when the light is put there? But is truth then of no use? I answer, it has an instrumentality in enlightening the understanding and convincing the conscience, according to natural principles. It has also an instrumentality in sanctifying those who are regenerated. But farther than this, the Scriptures do not warrant us to go. To represent the Holy Spirit then as a mere secondary agent, in using the instrumentality of truth, in renewing the heart, is entirely derogatory to that divine agent, and is robbing God of the glory of his most wonderful work.

But I forbear farther comment. The point now in view is the difference between new divinity and orthodoxy. This difference will be best seen by placing the two systems side by side.

ORTHODOXY.

"God created man after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness."

Andover Confession of Faith.

"Adam, the federal head and representative of the human race, was placed in a state of probation, and in consequence of his disobedience, all his descendants are constituted sinners, and by nature, every man is personally depraved."—*And'r Conf.*

NEW DIVINITY.

God created man a rational being, without any moral character.

Mann's Sermon.

Men are born destitute of moral character, and become sinners by their own act.

Stuart on Romans—Taylor's Creed.

"No means whatever can change the heart of a sinner, and make it holy—regeneration and sanctification are effects of the creating and renewing agency of the Holy Spirit. By convincing us of our sin and misery, and enlightening our minds, working faith in us, and renewing our wills, the Holy Spirit makes us partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ."

Andover Conf.

"It is the prerogative of God to bring good out of evil, and he will cause the wrath and rage of wicked men and devils to praise him; and all the evil which has existed, and will forever exist in the moral system, will eventually be made to promote a most important purpose, under the wise and perfect administration of that ALMIGHTY BEING, who will cause all things to work for his own glory, and thus fulfil all his pleasure."—*Andover Conf.*

Regeneration is produced by the influence of the Holy Spirit, operating on the mind through the truth.

Taylor's Creed.

"I do not believe that sin can be proved to be the necessary means of the greatest good, and that as such, God prefers it to holiness in its stead. But I do believe that holiness, as the means of good, may be better than sin; and that it may be true, all things considered, that God prefers holiness to sin in all instances in which the latter takes place."—*Taylor's Comment on*

[his Creed.]

See also Fitch on Permission of [Sin, in Chr. Spec.—(See Note.)]

From the above specimen, every one can judge for himself whether there is no difference between orthodoxy and new divinity, or whether that difference is confined to one point. And who will say, in this view of the subject, that the difference is not essential? If these points, in which the difference lies, are not essential truths in the Gospel system, then I ask, what is? Which of these points can be omitted, and the omission not have a demolishing influence on the whole system? The truth is, and it is now so far disclosed as no longer to escape general notice, there is a radical difference in these two schemes,—a difference which will array them in opposition to each other. One of these systems can succeed only by the subversion of the other. And whoever questions this consequence, must be ignorant or dishonest, in respect to this subject. This is a consequence which is perfectly well understood by the advocates of new divinity in secret conclave, and they have mutual gratulation in every instance, in which they suppose that new divinity obtains a triumph over orthodoxy. They confidently anticipate the day when orthodoxy will be driven from the land, and new divinity left without a rival. And yet some of their adherents will say, there is no difference, except in one *small* point.

But we must not forget the new measures; these are the legitimate fruit of new doctrines. And though, like the elements of a hail storm, they originated in different regions, yet their affinity soon produced a mutual attraction, and they came together, one furnishing the matter, and the other pouring it out. But the question is, what are new measures? To this I answer. To exhort sinners to immediate repentance, or to hold them to

their obligation, is not a new measure. This has been the practice in the orthodox churches, long before new doctrines or new measures were heard of. To represent then, that sinners have been, by ministers of our denomination, till lately, told to wait God's time, and that they would be excusable in so doing, is a slanderous report. Sinners have always been told, since I can remember any thing about the matter, that God required them immediately to repent, and that such is their indispensable duty. But they have also been told, as the Scriptures and facts teach, that they will not come to Christ that they may have life. And if left to themselves, they never will come. So that through their own perverseness and fault they are entirely dependent on sovereign grace for salvation. And is not this true?

But new measures, so far as I understand them, consist chiefly in the following things, viz :

1. In exhorting sinners to resolve to be Christians, or to promise that they will make religion their great concern ; and in representing such a promise or resolve as equivalent to the duty. Therefore, the great object of new measures appears to be to make people believe they are converted, rather than to secure their real conversion.

2. New measures imply, that a person's declaration in his own case, hastily expressed, is to be admitted by himself and others, as decisive evidence of his state. Consequently a *leading* object of new measures seems to be to lead people to proclaim their conversion, either by direct declaration, or by taking certain seats, or positions, or by certain signs previously concerted ; and especially to lead them hastily to proclaim this opinion, by hurrying themselves, in great multitudes, into the churches.

3. New measures imply, that every excitement which assumes the name of a revival, or any of its aspects, is to be regarded as really such. Hence those addicted to new measures are generally indiscriminate in their annunciations and praises of all movements, that put on the appearance of revivals. And hence they are censorious and uncharitable towards those who make distinctions between genuine and spurious excitement, stigmatizing them as enemies to revivals, as cold and formal, or dead.

4. Another feature of new measures is, to use up the excitable materials of the human system, without discretion or mercy. The process is entirely on the stimulating principle. And no calculation or provision is made for the unavoidable decline of excited feeling and heated passion. The whole object of these measures seems to be, to drive the elements of the animal system into entire commotion. And if four days are not sufficient, ten, or twenty, or thirty days must be occupied.

5. A certain consequence of new measures, therefore, is, to

blunt and efface moral sensibility, and to prostrate all genuine moral feeling, by the substitution and excitement of animal passion, and thus, in the result, to induce a stupor, which often ends in scepticism or infidelity. These measures also corrupt and distract the churches, by lumbering them with unmanageable numbers and unworthy members, and by unhinging all order and regularity of proceeding. This effect is already sufficiently evident from the state of the churches in our land, which have in the greatest degree fallen under the influence of these measures. Look at those churches where these measures have been rife and popular, urged on by revival men of the new stamp; and what is their present state—what their future prospects? We shall, perhaps, be better able to answer this question in the sequel, as I design to lay before you some testimony from these very churches. But, for the truth of these views of new measures, I appeal to every person who has had opportunity to observe, and to the transactions of many a protracted meeting in our land.

To the churches, therefore, of the Congregational connexion, is the appeal made—are these things to be admitted and approbated by us? Will you receive these doctrines, or countenance these measures? Why will you do it? Have not our churches been eminently prosperous, united, and happy, under the influence of orthodoxy? Have they not been blessed of God, and enjoyed his smiles almost beyond all example? And has not the harmony and fellowship of our churches been uninterrupted since they came under the influence of the doctrines taught by Edwards and Bellamy? Have not the fruits of righteousness been increasing? Have not charitable institutions sprung up and flourished under the auspices of our faith? What do we expect more? What benefit are we to hope for from a change of our ground? And instead of any rational prospect of benefit, are we not putting our dearest interests in jeopardy? Are we not running into unknown and dangerous seas, without chart or pilot? Is not our advance in moral improvement already checked? Is not the Holy Spirit grieved, and revivals, are they not becoming rare? Is not the hum of preparation for controversy already heard in our camp. Is not our College losing its hold on Christian sympathy and confidence? and our candidates for the ministry that are now presenting themselves—but I forbear. Brethren, you have new doctrines and new measures before you; with you it remains to say whether you will bid them Godspeed.

CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH SEEM TO INDICATE ARTIFICE.

It is with reluctance that I enter on this topic, and I should not do it if not constrained by a sense of duty. Certain meas-

ures of policy, and those apparently not consistent with strict integrity, have been adopted to carry forward a revolution in our churches, which ought to be known, and upon which the churches ought to have an opportunity to pass their judgment. To pass by these without suitable notice would involve unfaithfulness to the interests of Zion. I take leave therefore to state, that misrepresentations have been made of the sentiments of eminent men, of former days, for the purpose, as would seem, of gaining the influence of their names. Particularly is this true in regard to the writings and sentiments of President Edwards, whose praise is in all our churches, and who was, in his day, the great apostle of orthodoxy. He spent much of his time and strength in combatting Arminianism, as it was then understood to be, but whatever it be called, in combatting the very system which now claims to be new divinity. This he did with so much success, that he was the instrument of bringing back the declining churches of New England to the principles of the reformation. And such is the influence of his name in all these parts, that great attempts have been made to smuggle that influence into support of the very doctrines which he labored all his life to refute. For this purpose sentences and parts of sentences have been detached from their proper connexion in his writings, and so presented as to convey a meaning suited to the purposes of the culler. I should give examples of this artifice, if they had not been already so fully stated as to be rendered unnecessary. If any have not seen these statements, they are referred to a Review of Dr. Taylor's *Concio ad Clerum*, and to an Examination of Strictures on that Review in the *Christian Spectator*, where facts of this kind are specified. Many assertions have also been publicly made as to the sentiments and remarks of President Edwards, which are utterly unfounded in fact, and known to be so by all who are acquainted with the writings of that illustrious theologian. Indeed there is not a shadow of doubt that President Edwards would have rejected with abhorrence, all the peculiarities of the new divinity; because he did thus reject them in substance, under a different name. And it is cruel as well as dishonest to make the name of such a man, a shield for what he himself rejected as error. I would therefore call upon the churches to observe this artifice, and give it its proper influence in forming their opinion of the new divinity. What must the divinity be, and what must its authors be, when its support is trick and stratagem? The remarks of Dr. Miller on this point are worthy of serious regard by all who inquire for truth. He, from being long conversant with theological inquiries, as Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, must be supposed to be well acquainted with the writings of President Edwards, and qualified to interpret his language. In his seventh letter to the Presbyterian Church, he

says, "I am not unacquainted with the ingenious and plausible efforts of distinguished brethren who advocate these speculations, to reconcile them with the simple truths of the Gospel, and to shew that they do not differ from the doctrines taught, on the same subjects, by President Edwards, by Witherspoon, and other venerable fathers, whose praise is in all the churches. But the more I read of such efforts, the more I am amazed and dissatisfied. By a similar process, I could prove that President Edwards and John Taylor, of Norwich, did not materially differ. Either language has lost its meaning, or these brethren differ essentially from the excellent men whose authority they plead."

The same course, substantially, has been pursued with Bellamy and Dwight. Their writings have been garbled and tortured to extract from them new divinity. By this means the three most potent names in all the ranks of New England theology, have been literally pressed into the service of new divinity.

But the artifice does not stop here. Lately we have a *Church Psalmody* announced, as sanctioned by the name of Watts. In this production, there are omissions which Watts would have considered of fundamental importance. And thus the name of this good man is made a passport to a production, which Watts would sooner have lost his right hand than have authorized. In addition to this, agents have been abroad in the community, soliciting patronage for a "*Comprehensive Commentary on the Bible*," which, it seems, is to be culled from the works of Scott, Henry, and Brown. These friends of sound doctrine would doubtless prefer to speak for themselves, as they have spoken in their Commentaries, than to have their words disjointed and new modelled. And what can be the object of this invasion of the rights of authors, unless it is to turn the reputation of these men against their own sentiments, by presenting partial statements. I can perceive no other object to be accomplished by this patch-work commentary. The entire commentaries of Scott and Henry are now afforded so cheap, that any one, who will read a commentary, need not be without them. The moral honesty of this proceeding is at least very questionable. And the churches should understand, that not a little vigilance on their part will be requisite to avoid all the snares that are now prepared for them. "If it were possible," said Christ, "they shall deceive the very elect." And we may begin to understand something of the meaning of this passage. What remains on this point but that we have a new translation of the Bible? And such a translation is said to be preparing.

Another artifice which is employed to give currency to the new doctrines and new measures, is the representation, that they are a recent discovery, and a great improvement in the matter and manner of preaching. It is boastingly pretended

also, that all the benevolent institutions of the day are the fruit of new measures. We are told by some, whose modesty is not of the retiring, self-abasing cast, that the charitable efforts which distinguish our age and country derive their origin from *them*, the friends of new doctrines and new measures. Much more in this style of boast and vain-glory might be gathered from some of the publications devoted to new divinity. Now all this, to minds of common information, is known to be utterly false. The doctrines called new, are as old at least as the fifth century. And the ground of this controversy has been explored hundreds of times, before the present champions of new doctrines were born. And the measures, as to manner and form of presenting these doctrines, have no great claim to recent improvement. Those acquainted with the operations of Davenport, in the eastern parts of this State, near a century ago, will not give much weight to the claim of a new method of presenting truth, which is now preferred. The truth is, the fanaticism which followed the great revivals of 1740, put on much the same appearance, and adopted much the same course, with the new measures of the present day. And that fanaticism, which then claimed what new measures do now, to be the very spirit and essence of revivals and of true religion, extinguished, in some churches, the flame of piety, which could not be re-kindled for half a century. So greatly do men sometimes mistake, who verily think they are doing God service. It is very desirable that those who have strong confidence in new measures, and think that nothing like them was ever witnessed in the church, should know something of the extraordinary doings which prevailed in the early days of New England.

Trumbull relates, (vol. ii. p. 160,) "That the glorious work of God, (in 1740,) which had effected such a wonderful reformation of manners through the country, was marred and greatly injured, by imprudences and irregularities. Many lay-exhorters sprang up among the people, especially in the counties of New London and Windham. And among some there appeared an inclination to follow impulses, and a pretence to know the state of men's souls, who were converted and who were not." "It was Mr. Davenport's manner, when a number had cried out, and there had been great agitations of body, to pronounce them tokens of divine favor, and what was still worse, he would declare those persons, who were the subjects of these outcries and agitations, to be converted, or that they had come to Christ. He was further the great encourager, if not the first setter up of public exhorters, not restricting them according to the Gospel rule of brotherly exhortation, but encouraging any who were reputed to be lively, zealous Christians, to exhort publicly in full assemblies with ministerial assurance and authority, though altogether raw and unskilful in the word of righteousness.—

What had still a more mischievous influence than all the rest, was, his undertaking to examine his brethren in the ministry, as to their spiritual state, and publicly to decide concerning them, whether they were converted or unconverted. Some, whom he had privately examined, and who appeared to be men of as much grace as himself, he would in his public prayers, pronounce unconverted. Such as refused to be examined by him, were certain to be denounced, as either unconverted or in a very doubtful condition. Thus disorder, jealousy, and confusion were sown in the churches. He represented that it was a dreadful thing to hear unconverted ministers; that their preaching was as bad as poison, and he warned the people against it."

Concerning the prevailing irregularities of that day, the historian proceeds, (page 168,) "It was now a very critical and momentous period with the churches, for while the Spirit of God wrought powerfully, Satan raged maliciously, and played off his old subtleties by transforming himself into an angel of light, deceiving many. There was a false, as well as a good Spirit among the people, and a disposition to make religion consist in crying out, in bodily agitations, in great fears, in joys, in zeal and talk. When ministers in faithfulness pointed out their errors and false notions, and shewed them clearly in what true religion consisted, and pressed it upon them to be followers of God as dear children, they were, numbers of them, disobliged, and pretended that the ministers' preaching had a tendency to quench the Spirit. Many declared that they had rather hear the lay-brethren exercise their gifts, than to hear the ministers, and that more souls were converted under their exertions, than under those of the ministers. In their religious conduct, they were influenced rather by inward impressions, than by the plain word of God, or the manifest intimations of Providence. Neither ministerial advice nor parental counsel, nor their obligations to relative duties were of any weight with them, in comparison with impressions. They maintained that if they did not feel a minister's preaching, he was either unconverted or legal and dead. They thought lightly of those public meetings and exercises in which there was no visible great stir or operations among the people. They would commonly say there was nothing of the power of religion. There was a remarkable haughtiness and self-sufficiency, and a fierce and bitter spirit and zeal, a censoriousness, and impatience of instruction, and reproof among these people, and especially among their exhorters."— (See Trumbull's History of Connecticut, vol. ii. p. 170.)

Is it not evident from this account, that the spirit of new measures, has been an old spirit? Who can read these accounts of the abuses of revivals in former days, and not think of some recent proceedings in some of our churches, in which lay-brethren have been set to the work of public teaching, and leading

public devotions, in the presence of ministers ; and when regular pastors have been prayed for as unconverted ? Who can read these accounts, and not recognize the same spirit that dictates some of the narratives and remarks which appear in some of our religious newspapers ? Who will fail to see the similarity of spirit which now censures all that endeavor to check these extravagancies, and pronounces men, who have been laboring thirty or forty years for the promotion of true religion, enemies to revivals ? Who then will not see, that what are now called new measures are only a new edition of the extravagancies of former times ; the effects of which, in some places, are still visible in the desolations of many generations ? All past experience teaches that these new measures, if they were to become generally prevalent, would prostrate the spirit of true religion in our land, and turn our fruitful field into a wilderness. That such is now in some measure the effect, is but too evident. Whence comes the present prevalent languor of our churches, but from previous undue excitement ? This is not mere conjecture. In the western part of the state of New York, where these measures were first brought to bear extensively on the minds of people, the churches are said to be in a most distracted state. In the *Volunteer*, for April, 1833, is an article entitled, "*A voice of lamentation from the West.*" It commences with the following remarks, from the *Albany Journal and Telegraph*, viz : "The Presbytery of Niagara, which has borne its testimony in favor of good things, not long since, and whose competency of judging cannot be doubted, in its annual narrative proclaims to the churches some things, in which not a few, who have known something of new measures, can sympathize with them. Let the churches mark the following, and take warning :

"Reasons for the re-action in the state of feeling—the apathy which prevails."

"One great reason for this dearth and criminal apathy, is, we think, the wonderful success which has attended protracted meetings in this region in times past, insomuch, that we have become spiritually full and increased in goods. The church does not desire, and hardly expects a blessing on the stated preaching of the word, and the ordinary means of grace. For transferring that confidence to protracted meetings, or any other means whatever, that is due to the arm of the Lord alone, he is sending leanness to our souls." "Another evil we have to regret, and under which our churches suffer, is the effect of too great precipitancy, in times past, in some instances at least, in receiving members into the communion of our churches from the world. This has taken place chiefly through the excitation of protracted meetings, so soon as the individuals began to indulge hope, without examining them minutely on the great doctrines of grace, or waiting to impart to them previous and pre-

paratory knowledge and instruction, so needful to the commencement of *a good hope*. This evil also originates partly, from not requiring candidates to subscribe to the public standards of the Presbyterian church; though this omission, we are happy to say, has not been general among our churches. But so far as it has prevailed, and as a necessary result of such laxness, so contrary to our public standards, to common and long established usage, to the ordination vows of our ministers and ruling elders, and so plainly repugnant to the peace and purity of the Presbyterian church, a number have been received among us who refuse to receive the Confessions and Catechisms of our church. However pleasing in theory, and infinitely desirable in fact, the speedy upbuilding of the Zion of our God, over all the earth, yet, with us, painful experience demonstrates, that uniformity of doctrine and practice, is essential to peace and harmony, while that doctrine and practice, being conformable to the word of God, is no less essential to the purity, order, and prosperity of the church of Christ. Accordingly, as in duty to the churches under our care, we feel solemnly called upon to bear our public testimony against hasty, indiscreet admissions into the church, and particularly against dispensing with the public standards of the church on these occasions."

"Another obstacle to the progress of serious piety is, the unsettled state of the ministry on this part of the walls of Zion. Ministers now usually remain but a year or two in a place. We lament to find that the importance of settled pastors, who shall feed the flock with knowledge and understanding, is not duly felt by our churches, nor indeed the nature and obligations of the pastoral relation much regarded where it exists.—We hope and pray that these evils are sufficiently felt to return to the old paths, and by settling pastors wherever the ministry can be sustained, they will give permanence, stability, and increased effect to the pastoral office,—an office of inspired origin,—and at the same time preserve our beloved churches from that "*every thing*" which creeps into them during those retrograding intervals wherein they have no ministers."

The churches in Connecticut are entreated to listen to this testimony from a public body, situated where the new measures have had a full operation, and have produced abundant fruit. And what is this fruit, but the self-sufficiency, the insubordination of the days of James Davenport? Now to call this course an improvement in the mode of presenting truth, and of pressing it upon the conscience, or to call these measures new, as implying that they are something which has not been known before, is most egregious folly. Still more extravagant is the folly of ascribing the existence and prosperity of charitable institutions to the new measures. Every child knows that this is mere empty boasting. What charitable society is there in the

land that in the remotest degree owes its origin to these measures ? Indeed, if the new doctrines and new measures do not materially injure all our public institutions for benevolent purposes, by sowing the seeds of distrust and dissension, we shall have special occasion for gratitude ; for it must be owing to the interposition of a kind Providence. Will it be said by any, that the apathy on religious subjects, which is beginning to prevail in many places, cannot be justly charged to new measures, inasmuch as their whole object is to quicken the feelings of Christians and arrest the attention of sinners ? I answer ; the evil specified is nevertheless the effect of these measures, just as the torpor of the drunkard is the effect of stimulants. All unnatural excitement of passion, which goes in advance of the understanding, tends to produce debility and torpor in the system.

But some will undertake to draw a line of distinction between the new doctrines and the new measures, and will decidedly oppose the latter, while they see no harm in the former. They will say that they cannot go with the new measures,—that their foot is set down on that point, and that they would be Episcopalians or Baptists, before they would yield ; and yet they can give the right hand to the new doctrines, if they do not even adopt them. How is it that such persons do not see that the measures are the fruit of the doctrines, and cannot long be separated from them ? Let any minister or church welcome the new divinity, and they will find it impossible to prevent the natural effects. New measures, in all their fanaticism, will follow, and will have their run in the effervescence of passion, and then subside into the moral apathy of Laodicea. This experiment has been tried so often and so thoroughly that there is no room for doubt as to the result. Set down your foot as firmly as you please, if you adopt the cause, you must sooner or later feel the effect. I pity the man who takes a stand against new measures while he supports new doctrines ; it is like putting your shoulder against a water wheel without shutting down the gate. You may hold a moment by mere strength of muscle and dint of influence, but if public opinion is left open to the operation of the cause, it will gather strength, and finally overwhelm you.

But while most of the advocates for new measures and doctrines pretend to new light, and claim to have taken new ground, there are some who contend that they preach and think just as they always have done. Their views are not altered, neither have they gathered them from any modern source, but have been on this ground for many years. Hence they conclude that they are orthodox, and that the new doctrines are orthodox too, because they are just what they have always believed. In respect to this statement, I have to remark—if any declare that their views are not changed, we are bound to believe them ; but

that this fact proves, either that they, or those that agree with them, are orthodox, I must be permitted to question.

The explanation of this matter which appears most probable is simply as follows : The ministers and churches in this State, from fifty to one hundred years since, were almost universally buried in depths of Arminianism. In this state of things, there was a general stillness and quietude, like the house of death. Vital religion was seldom heard of. Persons were admitted to the churches and the ordinances of the Gospel as means of conversion ; all were then going to heaven by their own efforts. If any were scrupulous about coming themselves to the ordinances of the church, they were accommodated by what was called the "*half-way covenant*." A very appropriate designation. These, in the view of many, were halcyon days, the golden age of the church. All the children were then baptized ; all persons outwardly decent, and even some more, were members of the church ; then there were no sectarian divisions, for none had any inducement to separate ; for all were going, as they supposed, and as they were taught, directly to heaven. I recollect once to have seen an aged lady, who remarked, that she was a member of the church forty years before she had any knowledge of experimental religion, or even knew there was such a thing. She said her minister taught, that joining the church and maintaining outward decency was sufficient ground of hope. This was indeed cold Arminianism ; but cold or hot, it is the same thing in principle, and the hot will become cold.

But God finally caused his Spirit to breathe on this valley of dry bones, and a great reformation in our churches was effected, principally by the instrumentality of Edwards, Bellamy, and other kindred spirits. These men brought forward and explained the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, the nature of true religion, or that system of truth which is called Calvinism. The consequence of this reformation was, that spiritual life began to shew itself in the ministry and in the churches ; but worldly souls were offended and driven off. Now sectarian divisions began to make their appearance, and many began to cast off all signs of religion, and even to take the ground of open opposition. And though most real Arminians were driven off by this reformation, yet some of the less strenuous and more pliable sort continued so to modify their language, and shape their views, as to take rank under the banner of Calvinism. They were called *moderate* Calvinists by some, by others *semi-Arminians*, but what they really were was not known. Some of this description have remained to this day. And now, when a general relapse seems about to take place, and Arminianism begins again to lift up its head in high places, these men find, to their great comfort, it is just what they have always believed and *meant* to preach. They have always been "*border men*," and now that

they can speak out what has been smothered in their hearts, they are ready to conclude that they are orthodox, and that all who agree with them are correct. Said an aged minister in this State, not many months since, "I have lived to see two revolutions in the religious concerns of Connecticut. The first was from semi-Arminianism to Calvinism, which took place soon after I entered the ministry. And it was the result of great effort, and progressed very slowly, going as it did against wind and tide. But now our ministers and churches are going back again to the very ground from which Edwards and Bellamy labored so much to remove them, and they go with the rapidity of lightning."

This view of the subject may account for the fact that some ministers and churches find themselves at home in the new divinity. They have all along been sighing for the leeks and flesh pots of Egypt; they remember the quiet and union of former days, and now when they see a prospect of return to what they so highly approve, it is not surprising that they are animated. The Israelites we know, many of them, went into the wilderness against their will, for they had no faith in the promised land which lay beyond. And on every occasion of difficulty they were ready to murmur and return. Once they actually set up a calf in the camp, and said, "these are thy gods, O Israel," and under such auspices they were ready to retrace their steps to the house of bondage. And now if our churches will relapse to the depths of Arminianism, if they must again be filled with worldly spirits, and draw the great mass within their embrace by half-way covenants and other means; there are some who will say in the fulness of their hearts, "How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!" Our souls shall weep in secret places for your pride; we will even go down to our graves sorrowing for such a calamity, and praying for its removal.

STATE OF INDIFFERENCE IN THE CHURCHES AND THE MINISTRY, GROUND OF APPREHENSION AND ALARM.

There are some other points, brethren, which are of too much importance to be passed in silence, and yet which are points of great delicacy and difficulty. Duty to the cause of truth constrains me to call your attention to them, and yet I do it with trembling, lest I should give the ark a wrong touch, and mar the cause I would defend. But my reliance is on that wisdom which is from above, that I may be able to perform the requisite duty, without falling into temptation.

One point to which I refer is the prevailing, and as it appears to me, great and criminal indifference of the churches respecting the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel, and the interests

of vital religion. And lest I should entertain mistaken apprehensions on this point, and allege unjustly, I will merely inquire, and leave your own consciences to answer as in the presence of God, do I err when I suppose, that very little interest is felt in many of our churches, and by many church members, who, in other things are active and zealous men, in the fundamental principles of true religion? Is there not a great degree of impatience in respect to those discussions which are designed to bring forth and explain the features of sound doctrine? Is it not very difficult to persuade church members, to read or patronize any publications which are designed to explain principles? Will not many cast these publications aside, crying out, Dry, dry; or exchange them for those which are filled with mere news; or those, perhaps, which contain nothing but party bitterness or political strife? Is it not a fact, that the idle stories and fancies of book speculators have driven from many Christian families such books as those written by Scott, Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight, Baxter, and Jay; or, if not driven them from the house, have caused them to be overlooked and forgotten? How is this matter, look around you, look at your own practice, and make a true report.

If conscience pleads guilty in this respect, then I ask you seriously, what will be the end of these things? Where, in a few years, will be the judges of sound doctrine in our churches? Who will know, hereafter, any more than the blind votary of Romanism, whether truth or error is preached or printed? Are we not thus practically surrendering the very principle of the reformation, and adopting one of the worst dogmas of the Roman church? If this is so, it is time to look about us. Will you resign the keeping of your souls, and your immortal interests, to any of your fellow creatures; and is it no matter whether your faith be Scriptural or not, provided it agree with the teaching of some Rabbi? If so, then go back at once to the good old Mother of Rome, who has had long experience in dealing in the souls of men, as an article of her merchandize; but do not submit to the murderous rashness of some inexperienced practitioner.

Another evidence of prevailing indifference in the churches, is the little alarm which is manifested respecting the threatening aspects of our theological affairs. What would our fathers have said and done, if any suspicion of unsoundness in the faith, had, for a moment, lighted on our College, or our teachers in divinity? Would not they have been awake, and would they have been put off with flimsy pretences? But now, we see a portentous cloud hanging over our College, and the Theological Seminary connected with it, whence our churches are to be supplied with spiritual guides. This cloud has been growing thicker and darker every year. The angry elements are in

visible commotion about it, the wind roars on its confines, a tornado is evidently gathering; but the churches are slumbering in security, crying—peace, peace, to themselves. And what will be the end thereof? And this indifference is still more manifest from the facility with which many suffer their fears to be allayed. If the Theological Seminary alarms them, and they hesitate about sending their sons to the College, or giving money for its benefit, they are assured that the Theological Seminary has no connexion with the College, and no influence over it. With this plea many are satisfied, and thus a considerable portion of one hundred thousand dollars has been drawn from those, who sincerely disapprove of the theology taught at New Haven. And the sons of many, who would by no means have exposed them to the influence of this theology, have been, by the above plea, drawn from parental observation and beguiled from the faith of their fathers. Now, brethren, it is proper that you should understand this matter, and act with your eyes open. And it is truly astonishing that persons of discernment should have suffered themselves to be deceived in this manner. All who look at the situation of the Theological Seminary and the College must see at once that the above plea is utterly groundless. The fact is, the Seminary is connected with the College, by many ties, and they must have a common lot. No one can doubt this for a moment, when he reflects, that the Professor or Professors of the Seminary are members of the College Faculty, and are so announced on the annual Catalogue. Again, the Professor of Divinity in the College, who is the regular preacher in the College-chapel, and pastor of the church, if not also a professor nominally in the Theological Seminary, is deeply imbued with its spirit and doctrines, which he has not hesitated to exhibit and advocate. The same sentiments and spirit he doubtless exhibits in his ministrations in the chapel. What these are, may be learnt by attention to a Review of Fisk's Sermon, and an Essay on Divine Permission of Sin, published in the Christian Spectator. All the clerical part of the College Faculty, excepting the President, it is understood, are men who are devoted, soul and body, to the new divinity. The religious and moral influence, therefore, exerted over the students is almost exclusively of this kind. Now is it at all to be supposed that the College will not feel this influence? Is it at all probable that the credulous and susceptible mind of youth, in the case of every student whose opinions are not already formed, will receive no impressions from this powerful combination of influence? To suppose this is to expect a miracle. And those students who go to the College with formed opinions, must have minds of peculiar firmness, not to be shaken by nearly all the religious and moral influence in the College opposing them. But more than this, to say nothing of those personal and direct efforts to enlist the ardent

feelings of youth, which would be natural in such a case, I may add, that the *Christian Spectator*, a recreant periodical, which has apostatized from its own faith, as well as the faith of our churches, and is now, with closed doors, devoted to the new divinity; is industriously spread among the students in College, and is afforded to them at two-thirds of its nominal price. This is a fact which speaks volumes in respect to the influence which is secretly and unceasingly sent forth from the Theological Seminary into the College. Even the *Christian Spectator* itself, has had the boldness to claim affinity with the College. I recollect to have seen an advertisement of this work, in a Southern paper, in which it stood announced, that the work was edited by "*Officers of Yale College*." Nearer home, it is said to be edited by an "*Association of Gentlemen*." Now that there are gentlemen among the officers of Yale College, and enough even to make an *association*, I entertain not a doubt; and I may add, there are those among the officers of Yale College, who would not deem it necessary to label themselves an "*Association of Gentlemen*." But these gentlemen, I am confident, are not those who will say in one part of the country, that the *Christian Spectator*, that trumpet of new divinity, and of the Theological Seminary, is edited by officers of Yale College, and in another part, that the Seminary and the College have no connexion. Who then that regards impartially the true state of this case will believe, that the Seminary exerts no paramount influence over the College, or that youth sent thither will remain unbiassed? Who can calculate the effects of exposing the youthful mind, in all its generous ardor and artless simplicity, to the constant action of concentrated and unresisted influence? How is it with those youths even of Protestant parentage, who are exposed to the wiles of Papal artifice? Those parents then who have expected any other result, and have been sorely disappointed, have occasion to lament their own inattention and credulity, that their sons, whom they have anxiously educated for Christ, and the truth, are now engaged in making shipwreck of the faith.

It is further and moreover, a signal evidence of public apathy, that a Professor of Divinity in Yale College should publicly impugn the doctrinal standards of the College and the creed by which he professes to be guided, and yet retain his place. At a meeting of the President and Fellows of Yale College, November 21, 1751,—It was ordained, "That the *Assembly's Catechism*, and the Confession of Faith received and established by the churches in this colony, which is an abridgment of the Westminster Confession, (and was adopted at Saybrook, 1708,) contain a true and just summary of the most important doctrines of the Christian religion, and that the true sense of the sacred Scriptures is justly collected and summed up in these composi-

tions, and all expositions of Scripture, pretending to deduce any doctrines or positions, contrary to the doctrines laid down in these composures, we are of opinion, are wrong and erroneous."

"If any doubt or dispute should happen to arise, about the true meaning and sense of any particular terms or phrases, in the said composures, they shall be understood and taken in the same sense, in which such terms and phrases have been generally used, in the writings of protestant divines, and especially in their public confessions of faith."

"That every person who shall hereafter be chosen President, Fellow, Professor of Divinity, or Tutor in this College, shall, before he enters on the execution of his office, publicly give his consent to the Catechism and Confession of Faith, as containing a just summary of the Christian religion, as before expressed, and renounce all doctrines or principles contrary thereunto; and shall pass through such examination, as the corporation shall think proper, in order to their being fully satisfied, that he shall do it truly without any evasion or equivocation."

"That since every officer is admitted into his post upon the condition aforesaid, if he shall afterwards change his sentiments, entertain any contrary set of principles, or scheme of religion, and disbelieve the doctrines contained in the said Catechism or Confession of Faith, he cannot, consistent with common honesty and fidelity, continue in his post, but is bound to resign it."—(See Clap's Defence, &c., p. 14, 15.)

"In explanation of the meaning of the *Confession of Faith*, above mentioned, I may remark, that at a meeting of the Trustees of Yale College, at New Haven, October 17, 1722,—It was voted, "That all such persons as shall be elected to the office of Rector or Tutor, &c., shall, before they are accepted therein, declare their assent to the Confession of Faith owned and consented to by the Elders and Messengers of the churches in the colony of Connecticut, assembled by delegation, at Saybrook, September 9, 1708." The Confession adopted at Saybrook, as above stated, is then to be understood as the *Confession of Faith* adopted by the Trustees of Yale College as the standard of their faith.

By looking into this Confession, we find it stated, Chap. iii. Art. 2. "Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions, yet he hath not decreed any thing, because he foresaw it as future, or that which would come to pass upon such conditions."—Art. 3. "By the decree of God for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death."—Art. 4. "These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished."—Chap. v. Art. 1.

“God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy Providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.”—Art. 4. “The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his Providence, in that his determinate counsel extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men, (and that not by a bare permission,) which also he most wisely and powerfully boundeth, and otherwise ordereth and governeth, in a manifold dispensation, to his own most holy ends, yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin.”—Chap. vi. Art. 1. “God having made a covenant of works and life thereupon with our first parents, and all their posterity, in them, they being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, did wilfully transgress the law of their creation, and break the covenant in eating the forbidden fruit.”—Art. 2. “By this sin, they, *and we in them*, fell from original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.”—Art. 3. “They being the root, and by God’s appointment standing in the room and stead of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and corrupt nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending by ordinary generation.”—Art. 4. “From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.”—Chap. ix. Art. 3. “Man by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will, to any spiritual good accompanying salvation, so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able by his own strength to convert himself, or prepare himself thereunto.”—Art. 4. “When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin, and by his grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; and yet so, as that, by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly not only will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil.”—Chap. x. Art. 2. “This effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.”—Art. 3. “Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ, who worketh when and where and how he pleaseth, so also are all other per-

sons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the ministry of the word."

Now with this Confession in view, and the remembrance retained that every professor of divinity in Yale College is required publicly to declare his assent and adoption ; I ask you, brethren of the churches of Connecticut, to look into the various publications on theological subjects, which have issued from professors of divinity in Yale College, for the last ten years, and say, if this Confession has not been repeatedly and publicly denied ? Look at "*Sermons on the nature of sin* ;" a certain "*Concio ad Clerum* ;" at the *Review of "Spring on Regeneration* ;" at the "*Review of Fisk on Predestination* ;" at an essay on "*Permission of Sin*," and various other productions ; and tell me, if the venerable founders and trustees of Yale College, who established its standard of faith, have not had their divinity cast in their teeth, and publicly denounced by these professors of divinity ? The Christian Spectator too, as that is edited by "*officers of Yale College*," is probably edited by those who have publicly adopted this same Confession. Look then at the Christian Spectator, for five years past, and say whether it has attested the honor or honesty of its conductors. Here are men who have admitted the truth of a certain creed, and occupy an important post in consequence ; and yet do they not turn about, and, on the strength of that very authority which they derive from this elevation, undertake to vilify and destroy this very creed ? They may say that they have become convinced that the creed to which they assented, is not correct, and that they are bound to correct their error. This is all well. But if they have discovered it to be incorrect, why continue to hold a post on its foundation, and derive their support from its provisions ? They have a right, no doubt, to change their sentiments. But say the Fellows of Yale College, of 1751, "If they do this, they are bound, on the principles of common honesty, to resign their post," because they hold it on this express condition, that they consent to the above Confession, as the true doctrine of the Scriptures. While they continue to hold the post then, they do continue tacitly to declare their belief in the Confession. And yet here they are telling us that man is born destitute of moral character ; that God could not prevent sin ; that sinners can regenerate themselves, &c. Let these "*professors of divinity*," and "*officers of Yale College*," bring this subject home to the bar of conscience, and say, as they shall answer for it in the last great day, whether, as honest men, they can retain their places in that institution, and yet retain their present theological sentiments ? The question is not now, whether the standard of Yale College is right or wrong ; but the question is, can a man honestly profess the truth of it, and take an important post under its auspices, and then give it a flat denial ? But certain it is, that no man can

be either President, Professor of Divinity, Tutor, or Fellow of Yale College, without, either sincerely or hypocritically, giving his full and public assent to the above Confession. In which of these senses the present professors of divinity give *their* assent, I leave the public to judge.

The principal purpose, however, for which I state these facts, is to illustrate the prevailing indifference of the churches. The above glaring inconsistency has existed, and been a matter of public notoriety for a number of years. And yet who has ever manifested any disapprobation? What has the Corporation of the College ever done to correct this evil? Perhaps some of them would feel that they are in the same condemnation. And yet these men retain their places, and, in a considerable degree, retain public confidence. And these things are done in the very heart of the land of "*steady habits*." Scarcely any thing has ever filled my mind with more abhorrence of the human character than the fact, that, in one of the colleges in New England, a man, who is professedly an Unitarian, but substantially an Universalist or Deist, lives and regales himself under the garb of a professor of divinity, on funds sacredly devoted to the promotion and defence of the faith of our fathers. A man that will thus pervert and abuse the sacred benefactions of the dead, it is no matter what he is professor of—what he is, is but too evident.

But the charge of criminal indifference in these matters, is not to be confined to the churches. There is a lamentation to be taken up, if nothing more, on account of ministerial apathy and inconsistency in this respect. It is addressed to the churches, because the ministers are their pastors, and are to be followed, so far as they are themselves the followers of Christ.

I am not about to prefer any accusations, but certain facts have struck my attention, which appear to be worthy of serious regard. And, lest I should in any measure unjustly criminate, I will merely make a few inquiries, which every man of common observation is competent to answer. Is there not then, at present, among the ministry in this State, a spirit of compromise and expediency, which makes no proper distinction between truth and error,—between the Gospel and its counterfeits? To render this inquiry more intelligible, I will divide it into several branches.

Is it not true then, that there is a class of ministers in the State, and those too who claim to be orthodox, according to the true Calvinistic faith, who tell you that the present speculations on theological subjects in this State, are of no consequence, and are deserving of no serious attention? Do they not tell you that the new divinity does not differ from the established faith, except a few terms, or some small points? If this is so, then I ask, can these ministers be safe guides? If they do not know better, must they not be criminally ignorant and stupid? And if they

do know better, must they not greatly deceive ? It is admitted on all hands, that the above speculations respect some of the vital principles of our religion. Now if these speculations cast any true light on these subjects, is it of no consequence that the churches should have the benefit of that light ? And if they serve rather to darken, and bewilder, and pervert the mind, is it of no consequence that people should be guarded against them ? What then are we to think of a spiritual watchman, who cries, peace to his flock, and endeavors to turn away their attention ? Is he a true man, or is he a traitor ?

Is there not another class of ministers, who, though they claim to be true Calvinists in sentiment, are so fearful and so prudent, that, in all their public conduct, they act on the wrong side ? I allude to this class with great reluctance, because I regard many of them as honest and good men, who, in other respects, are an honor and a blessing to the church. But in the field of controversy or collision, they are so governed by feeling, so afraid of trouble, so easily looked out of countenance, that they dare not act, or always throw the cast on the cause of Christ. If a candidate is to be examined for license or ordination, they hope the best, they pass lightly over the points where they have reason to suspect him deficient, they allow him to equivocate and evade, and then wrap up the whole in a mantle of charity, and let him pass. And thus, wolves in sheep's clothing may be admitted to the fold. They are so appalled at the thought of division and contention, that had they lived in the days of Luther or of Paul, the faith once delivered to the saints must have failed of defence. They seem to feel, that to hide their eyes from danger is the same thing as to avert it ; and to hope all will go well is the same thing as to do the duty of a watchman. This may be a constitutional infirmity, and it may consist with great excellence of character in other respects. And yet, from no class of men, does the cause of truth, in certain circumstances, more severely suffer. They are always blocks in the way of decided, energetic measures. And though I would treat such men with great kindness and tenderness, yet I cannot but say to the churches, such pilots are not to be trusted in a storm. And if you have such at your helm, you will need to keep your own eyes open. For the time may come, and that soon, when these timid men will not dare to say any thing, lest they make difficulty, and then where will be your safety ? To do nothing, is often the same thing as to do wrong. Such men may be excellent pastors in ordinary circumstances, but in such times as the present, they are like the rolling ballast of a ship in a rough sea, they always roll to leeward, and upset the ship.

But I inquire again, is there not still another class, who aim, or appear to aim, at being on both sides of the question ? They are a sort of amphibious race, who can breathe in water or air,

truth or error. They can suit their creed to the company they are in, or to the circumstances with which they are surrounded. At one time they are loud and strong for orthodoxy, and denounce innovations, and speculations, and philosophy, with no measured censure. Anon, the tables are turned ; and now they are for union and peace, and think there is little, if any, difference, and reprobate any course of decision and consistency, as their obstinacy and bigotry. Their preaching, of course, if their audience be composed of persons of different views, will be neither one thing nor another, but a certain mixture of light and shade, or a twilight, which leaves both sides to claim them, and both sides in doubt where they belong. They attempt to secure their retreat often by the affectation of great candor and catholicism. They have spasms of charity for all, and they intend to preach Christ and his Gospel, and let controversy alone. But they do not undertake to tell how a man can preach Christ and his Gospel consistently, and not let his hearers know what he believes respecting the great points which the Gospel involves ; or how the trumpet can give an uncertain sound, and yet men be induced to prepare themselves to the battle. I ask merely, is there, or is there not, such a class of ministers in our State ?

As I hold fast the protestant principle of private judgment and no persecution, in matters of conscience, so I complain of no man for his opinion. Let him be decidedly one way or the other, only let him be consistent, and I pass him unmolested. Yes, more ; I give him my hand, as to an honest man, who is always found at home ; and with whom, though I differ in opinion, I can always meet and walk peaceably on the common ground of humanity and courtesy. But no man has a right, on protestant principles, to be inconsistent, or to prevaricate and deceive. If he has no opinion, and is incapable of forming one, let him say so. But to be trimming and veering to suit every wind of doctrine, is a just ground of complaint, and deserves severe reprehension. These characters, or as Bunyan would call them, these *Messrs. Twosides*, generally balk their own hopes, for by attempting to appear on both sides they gain the confidence of neither, and, according to the old proverb, generally fall between two stools.

In regard to these signs of indifference in our churches, I would now ask, are these things so ? If not, then one cannot believe his senses. For such is the almost daily report of eyes and ears. If they are so, then let me say, brethren, are you to make no difference between truth and error ; is it matter of indifference which prevails in this our beloved State ? Is it matter of no concern which we leave as the inheritance of our children, and of future generations ? Have we fallen back upon the period, when the Jesuit can sit and weave his net and spread it over his victim, and lead him as an ox to the slaughter ? Or have we

reverted still farther back, to the time spoken of by the prophet Jeremiah, when "the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so?" If so, then I would say with the prophet, in view of this sad condition: "And what will ye do in the end thereof?"

CONSEQUENCES OF THE ABOVE PRINCIPLES AND STATEMENTS.

And now, brethren, having attended to some of the circumstances of your case, and the signs of the times, let us see what duties are the consequence of these things.

1. It is clearly incumbent on all that regard true religion as of essential importance to themselves and others, that they cheerfully incur some sufficient labor and expense to acquaint themselves with its distinguishing principles. It is clear as the meridian sun, that the person who loves the truth, or would love it, must have some competent information. And this, in all ordinary cases, must be the result of patient and faithful investigation. How can it be otherwise? Do we expect that knowledge on these all-important topics, will come down to us from the clouds, or spring up from the earth, or grow upon the trees, or that we shall inhale it with the vital air? Or do we expect it will come in dreams and visions of the night? Surely not. We know there is no royal road to learning in religion, any more than in literature. What then are we to expect, if we turn away from the sober discussion of religious principles, because it requires some attention, or refuse to take a religious periodical, because it costs some money, or refuse to read a sermon or essay, because it requires an effort? True, books are greatly multiplied, and many of them are worthless, and some pernicious; but is that any reason why we should not have those that are valuable, or should not read them when we have them? Articles of food are very numerous, and many things offered as such are very worthless, or even hurtful; but shall we on that account have no wholesome food; shall we go lean and faint, and unable to do business, because there are things in the world that may harm us? Rather let us gather up the good, and cast the bad away. But some will say, probably, that they read for diversion, and therefore must have stories, or something that will move the feelings, and rivet attention; they cannot encounter the solid columns of dry discussion. To this it may be replied, that some reading of this sort, especially for children, may be desirable. But every man of sense knows that there are subjects, and those of great importance, that must be treated on the ground of sober argument, which requires great labor to investigate and arrange, and which requires not a little attention to read and understand. And why should a person of mature judgment always expect or calculate to read for diversion? Sup-

pose, when you go to your field to cultivate it, you should go with this feeling, and determine that you would submit to no labor, but must have entire diversion; what would become of your temporal interest? Suppose you should say, on surveying your field of corn—these rows are long, and this hoeing is dull, dry business, I cannot submit to it, I must have entertainment, and I will go where it is to be found; where would be your supply of food for the ensuing winter, and what will support your family or keep it from starvation? Just so, if you enter the field of religious cultivation, refuse all labor, and insist on diversion, if you will pass over a piece of instruction because it is long, or dry, where will be your knowledge? Will diversion keep you alive in time of famine; will stories, and fancies lead you to grow in the knowledge of God, and render you rooted and grounded in the faith? Indeed, if this course is pursued by the members of our churches generally, what but the utter extinction of true religion is to be expected? It is already an alarming evil that distinguishing fundamental truth, is so undervalued, so little understood. This evil is already opening the flood gates of error and delusion upon us. And unless our churches can be persuaded to change their course, inevitable ruin is before us. There are always men enough in the community, who, for money, will write and publish what people will buy. They will submit to be caterers to public taste, be it ever so vitiated. But men of principle and benevolence cannot do this. They will publish what they think will be beneficial, and if the community will not concur by their support, such men will speedily be driven from the field. For they cannot live and fatten on the vices and follies of their fellow men. If then the Christian public will give the preference to the mere efforts at diversion,—if they will pay their money for nothing but the chaff and froth of speculators; then all serious and instructive books must retire, and their places be supplied with the venal instruments of public degradation.

But it will be asked, perhaps, why cannot religious instruction be made to afford diversion to the reader? I answer, it can be, and always is to those who love it, and who search for it as for hid treasure. But in regard to those who feel inclined to indulge their indolence, rather than to seek their profit, I may answer the question by asking another, viz: Why cannot labor be made play? To those who feel an interest in the results of industrious labor, it will always afford sufficient entertainment, even in its severest forms. The man who believes that gold is beneath the earth, will be cheerful in digging and blasting till he comes at it. But if gold is of little value in his estimation, or if he already has enough, it will be very difficult to persuade him that digging the earth and blasting the rocks is diversion. It all depends upon the state of feeling with which a man reads, if he

reads what contains real truth. The Bereans searched the Scriptures daily and with great interest, because they had a strong desire to know whether these things were so. But many persons will be seized with a fit of yawning at the sight of a Bible. And in their case it will be very difficult to make the reading of the Scriptures a diversion. And to those persons who do not find entertainment in reading works of solid instruction, I would recommend practice and prayer until the interest is felt. But labor will be labor after all, and the only way to make it acceptable is to calculate its consequences. If heavy weights are to be removed, if high hills are to be ascended, strength must be applied, the muscles must be strained, unless we can avail ourselves of labor-saving machines. But even these will not avail in labors of the mind. As there are no mental mechanics yet discovered, no intellectual lever, screw, pully, or power of steam, I see no way to gain knowledge without labor.

It is a question then of no small consequence, whether the churches will sustain such publications and writers as discuss the essential principles of true religion? The magnitude of this question, and its most interesting relation to all our religious interests, render it properly a case of conscience. Permit me then, brethren, to ask you seriously, can you with a clear conscience refuse to patronize such publications as you honestly judge, are endeavoring to explain and defend the true doctrines of the Bible? I ask you not to abandon your own right of judgment, but I do ask, ought you not to exert your influence in support of what you verily believe to be the truth? Can you answer it to your families, to your own souls, and to your God, if the cause of truth be suppressed for want of patronage? And if you feel the importance of the subject, you certainly will not object on account of the expense. How much more do you expend for some convenience or indulgence which is comparatively trifling? And must the immortal mind be the last to be accommodated,—the first to suffer? I must be permitted to be earnest on this subject, because I regard it as a turning point in our religious prospects. If the present tendency of public feeling to trifle with spiritual interests continues,—if men—if Christians will hazard all the concerns of immortality to indulge in sloth; then in a few generations every vestige of true religion will be swept from our land, and our children will be prepared to be the dupes of some system of Papal or Pagan superstition.

A word in this place, and on this topic, is due to men of business, and of public life, whose plea is, that they have no time to read, and that they have already more books than they peruse. This plea is probably correct, and would be, if they had but one book. But the question is, is this course right? Is a man in the way of his duty, when he so plunges into the cares of the world, for the sake of money, that his mind, as to all its appropriate

employments, is nullified? What shall it profit him, though he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? To this same man of business and hurry, I would say, in a few years the world will turn you aside as unfit for its service, your limbs, your eyes, and ears, will fail, the time for gaining instruction will have passed by, the world will no more charm, the frost of age will light on your heads, the scenes of eternity will approach. Will you then feel no regret, no misgivings of heart, no deep and sharp compunctions of conscience for the course you now adopt? Will not the ghosts of your departed days haunt your memory, and constrain you to say, I have lost all?

2. Another point of practical consequence resulting from the principles and statements already advanced, is, that parents are bound, in the education of their children, to keep them, as much as possible from the contact and influence of error.

The practical question which arises under this head, and one to which we may now come without any ceremony or hesitation, is simply this, Can those parents, who adhere to the orthodox faith, as being essentially the doctrines of the Bible, consistently entrust their sons to Yale College for education? This question is not brought forward from any desire to injure the College, nor from any hostility to the interests of that venerable institution, any farther than its influence is enlisted against the truth. But the time has come when this question must be seriously examined, as a matter of duty,—as a case of conscience. In deciding this question, the facts to be considered are, that the new divinity has now the paramount influence there, and that the religious instruction communicated to the students is derived, to a great extent, from that source. And farther, it is to be considered, that there is no efficient resistance to this influence manifested from any department of the College. If any of the Faculty dissent in their private opinion, they deem it prudent and expedient quietly to submit. There seems then to be no rational prospect that the evil will be corrected. And farther, it appears evident, that all possible influence will be exerted by some of the Faculty, who have entrenched themselves within the walls of that seat of learning, to instil their principles into the minds of those who resort thither for education. The Christian Spectator is to be obtruded upon them at a large discount, and the pastor and spiritual guide of the College is one who teaches that God cannot prevent sin. Under all these circumstances, therefore, there is very little room for doubt, whether we look at the nature of the case, or the result of past experience, that all the youth, who resort to that College, will be thoroughly imbued with the new divinity. This has been the case to a very great extent for years past. And there is no reason to expect that the case will be improved. Many parents have been grievously disappointed at the result of their endeavors to educate their sons for use-

fulness ; and many a youth of fair promise, when he entered that College, has come forth a devoted zealot in the cause of new divinity. These things are then to be deliberately viewed by the parent, who is about to send his child from under his own eye, to receive the forming influence of other hands. The only question is, do you desire your sons to imbibe the religious sentiments which are prevalent in that College or not ? If you do, then send them, and it is probable the work will be done. But if you do not, if you regard the system as essentially erroneous, and would regard its influence as a blight on all the advantages of education, then your course is clear.

But it will be said by some, it is more convenient, and withal more respectable to obtain education at that College than at any other. But what is convenience or the influence of a name, compared with the great object of gaining education, which is to do good ? And is that person likely to do good, who is himself bewildered in the mazes of error ? There are colleges, which are accessible and respectable, which are yet free from this influence. The exposure therefore is wholly unnecessary, while it is an exposure, according to the convictions of the parent, of every thing valuable and desirable in a public education. Say then, ye parents, who adhere to the principles of orthodoxy, and are not prepared to abandon them, is Yale College, under present circumstances, the place to educate your sons ? Much as you respect that institution for what it has been, and reluctant as you may be to abandon it—and in all this I can most heartily sympathize with you—yet, taking things as they are, and are likely to be, must we not say the glory has departed ; it is no longer what its venerable founders designed it to be, a fountain of truth ; and is therefore no longer the college for us ?

If any are ready to say they are not sensible that the case is as has been represented ; then I ask, have you examined the case with attention ? Are you willing to run the hazard of proceeding in ignorance on this subject ? There are doubtless those who will tell you there is no danger, and that all which has been stated is fiction or malice. But who are they that tell you so ? You must know, or ought to know, there are two sides to this story. Ask the Unitarian, whether there is any danger of sending your son to Harvard University, or whether there is any heresy there ? Ask the Deist, whether it is perfectly safe to send sons to the Neological Seminaries of France or Germany ? Ask the Papist, whether it is perfectly safe to entrust your son to the arms of the good old mother of Rome ? And all will tell you there is not the least danger. But will this satisfy your mind ? Indeed, can you act consistently, and faithfully to your trust, until you have examined the matter, and are able to judge for yourself ?

3. Another practical question which results from the principles and statements already advanced, is this : Shall the churches

in this State any longer depend on the theological school at New Haven for a supply of teachers; or shall those members of churches who still believe in the doctrines handed down from their fathers, any longer assist in supporting teachers of this description?

I now address those who are firm in the faith that has been held in our churches the last fifty years, and who consider that system, as the true system of the Bible, and who of course consider the new divinity as essentially erroneous. And the case is this. The only present convenient source of supply for our vacant churches, is the school at New Haven. And the students of that school are thus likely in the course of events to be introduced into all our churches. This seems to result from the necessity of the case, so long as we have among us no other theological seminary. In this way many have to hear and support what they consider and believe to be contrary to the truth. Now is this a state of things to be endured? Can you quietly submit to hear the truths of God's word set aside, and doctrines subversive of truth, and ruinous to the soul advanced, and to have your families growing up under this influence? Can you give your countenance and approbation,—can you give your money to support erroneous doctrine? This is a very serious question. And it is a question which demands immediate attention. Not a day ought to be lost in bringing it to an issue. This is not a new case. Many of the churches in Massachusetts have found themselves in this same predicament. The majority of the parish would have a minister from the Unitarian school, and would control the house of worship and all the parish funds. But the Spirit of the Lord raised up a standard there, and will in every case where the truth is invaded. In that State many churches and parts of churches have found it necessary to separate from the congregation, and the place of worship, and provide for themselves the means of correct instruction. And they have been blessed in the attempt; pure religion has been revived in connexion with these separations. And there seems to be a necessity to adopt some such measure in our State. The leaven of the new divinity is so generally diffused and diffusing, that there are probably few churches and congregations that remain entirely free from its influence. And in quite a number of churches and congregations that influence is predominant. It remains then for the minority, in such cases, peaceably to separate and provide for themselves. New churches and congregations must be gathered, of those who can agree. And thus the truths of the Gospel, in their purity, may be still enjoyed. But to submit to see our goodly heritage and our families overrun with error, is entirely out of the question. This none can do who have any sincere love to the truth. And to expect or demand this is the height of arrogance and folly.

Do you ask, what can be done, and how are we to be supplied with teachers? I answer, there is no way but to have a theological seminary in this State, which shall inculcate sound doctrine, and raise up candidates for the ministry, who may supply the churches and congregations, that stand firm on the ground of orthodoxy. But you ask, perhaps, how are we to obtain the means? I answer, the Lord will provide. Go to him for help, for he hath never said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain. The hearts and the treasures of all are in his hands. And is it too much to suppose that there may be some Phillips, or Bartlett, or Abbot, or Brown in our State, who will have his heart opened to furnish all necessary supplies? Are there no friends of the truth in this State, who have the means, and the disposition to come forward in this exigency, and help to raise a standard against the overflowing errors of the day? It is also to be remembered, that a way has been discovered for young men to educate themselves, with very little expense to their friends or the public. And what hinders our having a manual labor theological seminary in this State, where soundness of faith, and soundness of health may go hand in hand, in promoting usefulness in the cause of Christ? The plan is entirely practicable, and may be incalculably useful to the cause of truth in this State, and through the world. Let this subject, therefore, receive the attention and excite the prayers of all the friends of truth, and I doubt not we shall see a way through the Red Sea.

But there is another point to this question, and that is, what is the immediate duty of those who live where pastors and teachers of the new school are already settled, and who feel that they are fed with error, instead of knowledge and understanding? In reply, it may be remarked, that it can be the duty of no man to hear or support for a day, what he conscientiously believes to be essentially erroneous. The Scriptures are very explicit on this point. "*From such withdraw thyself.*" "Receive them not into your houses, neither bid them Godspeed, for he that biddeth them Godspeed is partaker of their evil deeds." And as all the churches and pastors are not yet contaminated, there may be relief found, in most cases, by resorting to those places contiguous, where the pure Gospel is preached. And no conscientious man will think it a hardship to encounter some additional trouble and expense to hear the Gospel in truth, rather than hear it perverted. The laws of the State prescribe no parish limits, but allow every man to go where he can obtain most edification. This may be a merciful provision for the necessities of the present period. But it will, perhaps, be said by some, that they are solitary individuals, and that in many cases the friends of orthodoxy, if they were to attempt any thing,

would be a contemptible minority, and could not hope to effect any thing, and that they had better lose what they pay for the support of the Gospel, than make an unavailing effort. If the loss of your money were all, this argument might be sound. But think what you lose that is of more value than money. You lose your spiritual food, and consequently your vigor and comfort. You lose the proper instruction of your families, and, continuing in this course, they will probably lose their souls. And is not this too much to lose, if it can be saved? Besides, as to the contemptible minority, how has it been in the temperance cause? But a few years since, the friends of entire abstinence might have been esteemed a contemptible minority; but what of that, they have now become a host, and the strong holds are falling before them. It is not a day surely to make such a plea as this. At any rate, let every man do his duty, and the cause of truth will be supported. Let no man's heart fail him. It is not the first time that the cause of the Gospel has been, to human view, very weak and hopeless, and yet that cause lives, and will live. Weak instruments and small numbers, are no evidence that God has forsaken it. But the friends of truth must be decided, they must no longer compromise, nor suffer themselves to be the dupes of artifice, but stand up manfully, and in a Christian manner, to the work to which divine Providence has called them.

4. But the principles and statements above presented, lead to another, and a still more important practical inquiry, and that is, whether entire separation from those infected with the new divinity and new measures, is not the immediate and indispensable duty of all the orthodox part of our ministers and churches?

This question, I am sensible, is momentous, and ought to be approached only with the utmost deliberation and candor. It is a question with which party feelings, or excited passions, should have no concern. And yet, it is a question, which, I am persuaded, cannot with propriety be kept any longer out of sight. It is mere affectation to say or pretend that we are not a divided denomination. And the division has occurred on grounds, and in respect to subjects, which will satisfy any reflecting mind that it is deep and will be permanent. It is a division about the very pillars and corner stones of the Christian fabric. Examine the parallel columns of doctrines given in a former part of this address, and say, if the division does not extend to the very foundations of Christianity? These two systems are antipodes, and can no more be brought together than the opposite poles. This conclusion is demonstrated by the experience of all former ages. These two systems have, under one name and another, been the leading systems in the visible church ever since the promulgation of Christianity. And they have never been united, but have always produced a separation. No sooner was the creed,

which is now denominated new divinity, avowed by Pelagius and Cælestius, than the orthodox found it necessary to separate from them. The heretics, indeed, by means of every art and evasion clung fast to the church, and seized on all places and persons that came within their reach. But the friends of evangelical truth could not go with them, and a separation was the consequence. The same is true of the appearance of Arminianism, which was the same system, under circumstantial modifications. After various evolutions, in which the heretics endeavored to conceal and evade, they were finally detected, and a separation was the consequence. And in all cases where these two systems have been embraced and advocated, a separation has resulted. From this uniform effect, it is now certain that the Calvinistic, and Arminian creeds cannot coalesce, or harmonize. They contain the principles of opposition, and whenever brought into contact, those principles will be arrayed on opposite sides. That these two systems have now come into active operation in our denomination, can no longer be questioned, by any man who gives the least heed to facts. I repeat it then, to say that we are not a divided denomination in fact, is mere affectation. And there appears to be no rational prospect, that either side will recede. Some have entertained the expectation that these new speculations would wear out, and spend themselves in mere speculation; but far otherwise is the fact, and the prospect. They are so consonant with the natural feelings of men, that they take deep hold on the community. And many worldly spirits in our congregations and churches, that have been held in check by public opinion, are now beginning to rejoice in their liberty, and are cheered to find themselves supported by doctors and professors of divinity. The advocates of new doctrines and new measures have gone too far, and have been too successful in gaining popular favor, to think of a retreat. And I need not say, for you, brethren, will, many of you, bear witness that there are those in our churches, in no small numbers, who are so persuaded of the truth of the opposite system, they find it so clearly revealed in the word of God, and have been so evidently imbued with it in their own experience, and by the teachings of the Holy Spirit, that they never can renounce it. They will hold fast the form of sound words which they find in the Bible, let philosophers and critics say what they will. Indeed, they would sooner part with life, than abandon that which they verily believe to be the blessed truth of God. There is then, there will continue to be, a division in fact. And the only question is, whether, being divided in fact, it is expedient or proper to keep up the appearance of union? Respecting this question, I wish to submit a few remarks.

The advantages of a visible union, in such a case as this, are

merely nominal,—they are not real. We may continue to count our churches and ministers and members as one denomination, and may thus keep up the appearance of strength. But this is mere delusion. The bonds are dissolved; the foundations are broken up. We may talk of harmony and peace, but this will be no more real than in a state of visible separation, nor probably as much so. The truth is, separation, in case of real division in essential doctrines, is often the only way to preserve peace. It would doubtless be unwise for our denomination and the Methodists to attempt to amalgamate, and the attempt would prove abortive. But could it be effected in form or name, no advantage would be gained. For now, by mutual courtesy and Christian forbearance, we can have peace with Methodists, while each moves in his own proper sphere. But there is at this moment more real difference between the New-divinity men and the Orthodox, than there ever was between the latter and the Methodists. The new divinity pushes farther into the Pelagian scheme, and adopts more extravagant notions respecting the moral government of God, than the Methodists have ever done. And in regard to extravagant measures, the Methodists certainly, at the present day, and probably in the days of their greatest wildness, are outdone by the fanaticism of the new measures. So that there would be much more propriety in an union of the orthodox with the Methodists, than continuance in union with the new divinity. And yet, it would not be expedient to attempt even that, because there are points of difference, that will never be settled in the present world, that would be more felt in a state of contact, than in a state of separation. There are then no real advantages to be gained by a nominal union. But on the other hand, can it with truth be said, that there are no disadvantages consequent upon such a state? In my view, there are many, and those of serious magnitude. A nominal union brings those constantly into collision, and necessarily, for the transaction of business, who are wide asunder in sentiment. Of course this difference will be perpetually galling and chafing, and thus the evil and its effects will be greatly aggravated. For example, in meetings of Association, one brother is appointed to preach, and whether new divinity or old be his theme, he preaches what he believes, and urges it with an earnestness which becomes the truth; but others present, who entertain different opinions, are wounded and grieved, feeling themselves publicly assailed. Questions, also, in ecclesiastical meetings, will occur, involving principles that call forth feeling, and awaken interest on different sides, and before any one is aware, the line of distinction begins to appear, and opposite standards are erected. Indeed, all the exercises, public or private, of ministerial or ecclesiastical meetings, composed of persons who

are asunder in fundamental principles, must be, more or less, embarrassed and unsocial, if nothing worse. It is true, that constant watchfulness and prayerfulness may preserve decorum and civility, but yet the question is, whether it is expedient, or even a duty to place ourselves in this situation of temptation? Who does not desire, when he goes to such meetings, to feel that he is among friends, where he may unbosom himself, without the necessity of casting an eye on the right hand and the left, to see if some Doeg be not there, who will carry away an evil report? In a word, who does not desire to attend such meetings with that entire cordiality and confidence, which formerly marked the Associations of the ministers of Connecticut? But those days are gone. Those scenes are known now only from recollection. And they will probably not be known again, until a separation of our present discordant materials takes place.

Another serious disadvantage of nominal union, where there is real difference, is, that it will throw all our ecclesiastical affairs into confusion. To state some cases, which may occur, if they have not already. Here is an Association, the majority of which is in favor of the new divinity, and they, of course, will license candidates according to their views. But the minority, dissenting, and that on grounds of essential truth, cannot, indeed, prevent the license, but they in their own desks, cannot in conscience receive such candidates, neither can they approve of them when brought before the churches. Here is an incongruity. And many members of the churches are in perplexity. How are we to know, say they, who is a proper person to employ? Here is a candidate licensed and recommended by your own denomination, and your own Association, perhaps, and yet, some ministers object to him, and will not receive him as a preacher of the Gospel.

Another case is, that a person may present himself for examination and license to one Association, where the majority happens to be on one side of the question, and they reject him as unsound in the faith; he goes to another, where the majority happens to be on the other side, and they license him to preach. Here is confusion. In the same denomination, the same person, on the same grounds, is by a part rejected, and by a part accepted. And how are these Associations to stand in regard to each other? Another case may occur, in which a candidate for ordination, is examined by one council, and they decline to ordain, either for want of satisfaction, or from dissatisfaction. The parties send off and collect a council of persons of views known to be on the opposite side; and they proceed to ordain. Now, how is this minister, thus obtruded, to be received and treated by different members of the same denomination? Can those who refused to ordain, receive him and treat him as a Gospel

minister? Can those who did ordain, refuse to receive and treat him according to what is implied in the ordination? Here then is confusion. In this way the order and harmony of ministers and churches must be effectually destroyed.

There is another consideration which I may plead with the orthodox, and which with them ought to have great weight. And that is, the sound parts of any body, are always in danger from contact with the unsound, and this danger can be avoided only by separation. The tendency in this case is to decay. The danger then is all on one side. The unsound parts have nothing to fear from contact, and therefore they have no occasion for separation. Indeed, we always find that heretics are always great advocates for union and forbearance. The reason is obvious. A continued union gives them opportunity to extend their influence in concealment, when a separation would drive them to the necessity of doing it openly. Innovators and heretics are then always crying out for union and peace. They are always ready to denounce any attempt at separation, and to stigmatize the bare mention of it, as uncharitable and malicious. But look at them, and you will find, that their claim of charity is all on one side. They will think for themselves, and then require you to agree. They will take any course they please; break in upon the order, purity, or doctrines of the church, as they think proper, and then call for charity and harmony. They claim charity, but they exercise none. They call for peace, but they are unwilling to give it.

It belongs then, to the sound parts of a body to be watchful over their own interest, and to be attentive to their own situation. Theirs must be the work of separation, if it be effected. And theirs will be the loss, if it be not effected. By continued contact the evil will secretly spread, until the whole mass be corrupt. And this I view to be the present danger of the ministers and churches in this State. The danger does not arise immediately from the number or strength of those who have fallen away to heresy. For there is not a doubt, that if the friends of evangelical truth in this State would come forward with firmness and decision, and unite in support of what they really believe and love, the new doctrines and new measures would be stayed at once. They can make no great advance in the open field, but among the openly ungodly. But the danger is, that the friends of truth will be beguiled, and deceived, and duped, until the power is wrested from their hands. They are deceived with the syren voice that sings of peace and union, only to draw them on the hidden rocks. They are drawn into concessions and compromise, until there is no recovery. When I see accounts in the public journals of fathers and brethren, who are decidedly orthodox and evangelical in their views, and who

would sooner lose a right hand than do any thing contrary to the Gospel, and yet, who are so infatuated by some means, as to assist in introducing to the ministry and placing over our churches, men who are most zealously devoted to the work of undermining the foundations of our faith, I confess I tremble for the ark. And also when I see members of churches, who are decidedly opposed to new doctrines and new measures, when they see them—so far deceived by fair words, as to receive and support the most violent advocates of these very doctrines and measures, I am perplexed, and find all calculations at an end. Here lies our danger. Orthodoxy has nothing to fear from the number or strength of her opponents. They have been met,—they can be again,—and the taunts of Goliath are no occasion of trepidation to the host that rallies under the banners of truth. But if her friends prove treacherous, or unfaithful, her cause is in danger. For deception and artifice on the one hand, and indifference and credulity on the other, will sink any cause. The Greeks labored ten years in vain to break through the walls of Troy. But by artifice they effected what they could never have done by prowess. The deluded, infatuated Trojans, were induced to drag their own ruin upon themselves. They opened their own walls,—they introduced their own destruction, and thus fell the victims of their own folly. And this is just what the friends of orthodoxy are now doing in Connecticut. They are now, many of them, dragging in a wooden horse, (under the name of a theological seminary,) filled with the disciples of new divinity, over the walls of their own churches, and placing it in their own pulpits, and comforting themselves with this supposed act of piety. But presently they will be roused from their slumbers, to see themselves and their families sacrificed upon their own altars.—Friends of evangelical truth, will you be thus deceived; will you be made the infatuated instruments of your own ruin?

It is an ancient maxim of unquestionable expediency, that those who cannot agree, should agree to differ. And this is all that for which I plead. I wish for no contention, or strife, or bitterness; for this very reason I would say, separate as soon as possible. I would say as Abraham said to Lot, and for the same reason—let there be no strife between us, but let us separate to the right hand or to the left. The orthodox do not wish to entrench upon the rights of their brethren who differ from them. We do not wish to dictate to them what they shall believe, or support. If they choose the new doctrines and new measures, we are sorry, and we pity them; but we submit, and say, do as seemeth you good. If they take away our College, for which our fathers in common labored and prayed, we must submit to this also; but we cannot go with them; we do not

see as they do ; to us it appears that they are departing from the word of God, and giving heed to fables. This is our settled judgment, our honest conviction. Now what can we do ? Can we sit down to hear and approve what we verily believe is contrary to the word of God ? This no rational person will suppose ; this no candid person will demand.

If circumstances are such that it belongs to us to secede, then we must do it. But we do it not from choice, but as a duty. We esteem ourselves, and wish to be esteemed by others as Calvinistic Congregationalists, such as were our fathers. On this ground we take our stand, and here we claim and expect to receive the charity and courtesy due from all professed Christians to each other, and these we intend to reciprocate. But to be subjected to receive men as preachers, and support them, or to assist in sending them as missionaries to the heathen, who, as we believe, preach doctrines essentially erroneous ; this we may not do. Neither do we feel willing to expose ourselves to the encroachment of sentiments which we disbelieve, or to have them obtruded upon us in our ministerial intercourse.—We have borne the trial as long as we feel it a duty to bear it. And now we declare to the world, and to all the family of Christ on earth, that we feel ourselves in duty bound to separate from those who have forsaken the faith of our fathers. We feel it a duty to bear testimony against their errors ; but we shall avoid all unnecessary causes of irritation or recrimination. We wish them well, and pray that they may be led into the truth. But we go with them no farther. We must follow what we conceive to be the word of eternal truth.

And now, dear brethren of the Congregational churches in Connecticut, as a separation of our denomination seems to be approaching, and in reality already begun, the subject must soon come before you for you to decide what part to act. It is time therefore that your minds be prepared for such a crisis. Will you hold to the faith of your fathers,—the faith which they planted on these shores, in the strength of which they labored, and endured to the end, and entered into rest ; or will you abandon this standard ? If you are better pleased with new divinity, and think it more consonant with Christian experience and with the word of God, I have nothing more to say. You must make your election. But if you adopt the new doctrines and new measures, do it with your eyes open, with a full understanding of what it is. Say, if you think so, that sinners convert themselves, and that God does all he can to save all men, but does no more for one than another ; say, if you think so, and can find good ground for the opinion, that God cannot prevent sin from coming into, or existing in his dominions ; say that men are born without any moral pollution ; but if you say this, know what you

say, and look at the consequences. Do not deceive yourselves, nor attempt to deceive others, by saying, there is no material difference between your belief and that of the orthodox ; do not pretend that you embrace the Calvinistic system, nor be surprised nor offended if others cannot go with you. Come out and frankly avow that you renounce the faith of our fathers, and that you are ready to embrace sentiments which they labored all their lives to refute. Do not pretend that you have made some new discovery, some improvement upon the doctrines of revelation, and the manner of applying them, when both the matter and the manner have been the common track of fanatics for hundreds of years. And when you witness the ultimate effects of this system, in the corruption of our churches, the prostration of religion, and the prevalence of ignorance and infidelity, as I have no doubt you or your children will witness, and that before many years ; then remember that you were warned of these consequences, and that by adopting this system, under these circumstances, you assume the whole weight of responsibility. So then, brethren who follow the new divinity, we bid you farewell ; our roads part at this point, and all we have to say, or wish farther, is, that you may obtain mercy of the Lord, and be led into the truth.

To those in our churches, who are ready to say, they must and will walk in the good old paths, which have so long proved the way of safety and prosperity, and that they will and must, as in duty bound, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and handed down to them from their fathers, I have a word of exhortation. Brethren, be firm and stedfast, holding fast, according to the direction of Paul, the form of sound words, and be ready to shew yourselves on the side of truth.

The odium which may be cast upon you, as schismatics, or disturbers of the peace, or as a feeble, contemptible minority, is only the common and stale language of all that attempt to lord it over the heritage of Christ. If it were the first time that the friends of the truth were thus abused, we might have some cause of dismay. But when we reflect that the Papists have long ago worn this plea out, and shown it to be utterly ridiculous, we need not be terrified. The bulls of Bashan may bellow, the thunders of the Vatican may roar, we heed them not. The truth is our defence. And we appeal to every conscience, for the truth of the declaration, when we say, we make no schism. It is made by those who sow the seeds of error in our churches. And in peaceably separating from those whom we regard as departing from the faith of the Gospel, we do no more than perform a plain Scriptural duty. And has not the time arrived when this duty becomes to us unavoidable ? If not, when will or can such a time arrive ? We have now no alternative, but to aban-

don what we regard as the essential truth of our religion, or separate from those who have, as we believe, made this abandonment. What benefit can possibly result from our continuing visibly to walk with those whose sentiments we believe to be erroneous? And is it not time for us to provide for our own safety? The fact is, we are in danger of being overwhelmed with this flood, and we and our families are in danger of being reduced to the necessity of hearing, what we regard as false doctrine, or none. And is this a situation in which we can be quiet? The measures of safety and defence which the common cause requires, cannot be matured and carried into execution, while we are in connexion with those who will exert all their influence to thwart our designs. Until we have a separate organization, and are united in our exertions to exclude false teachers from our churches, there will be no effectual barrier to their influx,—no way to provide correct theological instruction for ourselves,—no way to sustain such periodicals, as we approve, and as may need our patronage. Friends of orthodoxy, you must act in concert, if you would see the cause of truth supported. You must withdraw and withhold your patronage from those publications which are openly or secretly, undermining our faith.—Such publications there are in this State, which at present derive a large share of their support from those whom they covertly oppose. Let this ground be thoroughly examined. We can have newspapers, and quarterly reviews in support of the truth, and we must have them. We can have a theological institution in conformity to the lively oracles, and we must have it. But to this end we must rally under our own standard and know our strength. Then may we hope to have spiritual guides raised up, in whom we can confide, and to whose faithful care we can commit our children, when we are called to depart hence;—spiritual guides, who, walking in the steps of Edwards and of Dwight, so far as they were followers of Christ, shall be burning and shining lights, and in whose light many will rejoice.

The path of duty, then, is plain; let not any man shrink from it in this crisis; but let every friend of the truth come up to the work, and say—"In the name of our God we will set up our BANNERS."



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